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**(D)URBAN IDENTITY:
STORIES OF AN AFRICAN CITY**

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Thesis Presented for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN

April 2006

Abstract

This thesis offers a cultural approach to reading Durban's urbanity and identity. As such, it tackles the paucity of cultural research being conducted at the city scale in South Africa. In so doing, it advances a fresh postcolonial urban geographical tradition useful to both local and international scholarship. By paying attention to the cultural and representational stories which shape urban life and form, geographers can engage more fully with the performed, imagined and lived fabric of cities.

The narrative of this thesis therefore treats Durban as both concrete and representational. It considers the theoretical implications of postcolonialism and Africanity, thereby shedding light on the mutually constituting nature of identity and urbanity. The crucial role that the urban plays in drawing together the themes of postcolonialism, multiculturalism and creolisation is highlighted. Equally importantly, the thesis brings the African context to bear on these issues. The narrative illuminates the manner in which urbanity and Africanity have traditionally been constructed as polar opposites.

In order to subvert this assumption, the thesis reveals Durban as a palimpsest space. It highlights the creolisations inherent in Durban's pre-colonial form and identity and suggests that the colonial project sought to disguise this history by reinventing Durban's landscape. Such concealment is reiterated in the postcolonial present by Durban's dominant marketing apparatus. The 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign (which attempts to 'sell' Durban) and the uShaka Marine World flagship development (which aims to regenerate Durban's built environment) merely serve to reinforce a ruralised, stereotypical version of Durban's identity and urbanity. Thus, Durban is represented through a discursive-material dualism which profiles the city through the reinvented colonial tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture.

Yet there is significant opportunity for Africanity to be attached to urban manifestations of culture. Numerous cultural practitioners in Durban are inscribing city life and form in a manner which engages with the identity and urbanity of the African present. This is an important point for policy-makers for it suggests that urban cultural regeneration can emerge organically and lead to a creolised and transformed African landscape. The narrative thus underscores the potential for forging creative approaches to reinvigorating postcolonial African cities and our understandings of them.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisor, Sue Parnell, for her committed guidance and mentorship, not only during the course of this thesis but throughout my university career. She continues to inspire me on both an academic and a personal level.

Jenny Robinson has also had a profound influence on my thinking. On three different continents she has always gone out of her way to listen, offer constructive help and suggestions.

I am indebted to the Department of Environmental and Geographical Science and Sharon Adams in particular for administrative and logistical aid. I would also like to note my appreciation to my second academic home, the School of Environmental Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, for their interest, friendship and cartographic assistance.

A good librarian is a wonderful asset to any student, I am doubly lucky to have one who is also my mother. Thanks are due to Margaret, Greg and Denzel for their encouragement and support.

Parts of Chapter 5, now published as Bass (2002), were originally prepared as a paper for an Honours level course at the University of Natal, Durban. I am most grateful to Shirley Brooks who first engaged my mind on some of the issues in this thesis.

The financial contribution of the University of Cape Town is noted. The financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) towards this research is hereby acknowledged. Opinions expressed and conclusions arrived at, are those of the author and are not necessarily to be attributed to the NRF.

Abbreviations

DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
ICC	International Convention Centre
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
iTRUMP	inner-Thekwini Regeneration and Urban Management Programme
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
KZNTA	KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority
LTDF	Long Term Development Framework
ORI	Oceanographic Research Institute
SAAMBR	South African Association for Marine Biological Research
VOC	Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie

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Note on Terminology

Where I use racial definitions such as white, coloured, Indian and black African, I do not mean in any form to condone apartheid's categorisation of people by race. This terminology is generally presented in lowercase throughout the text in order to indicate my reluctance to referring to these categories. I am also uncomfortable with the essentialising nature of the term, 'Zulu'. In most cases, unless inescapable or introduced by another, I use single, inverted commas to highlight my distance from the designation.

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Part I

1

Introduction

Durban Girl

I am a Durban girl. I know this from the way I shorten my 'i's in a manner which renders words like 'milk' and 'Kim' far more truncated than, say, the Capetonian version. I know I am a through and through Durbanite from the moment I step outside on a day so laden with moisture that I can feel it pressing against my skin. February is my favourite month; those days which are hotter than hot, stickier than golden syrup and as close as cling-wrap. While others moan and complain, there I am, Durban girl, striding through the sweaty streets. I love Durban, its hustling bustling harbour, its snobby malls on the Berea, the University suburb in which I live. Above all, 'Town' is my favourite place. I love the bright mosaics bursting into little spurts of colour alongside the streets. I enjoy walking in 'Town' and watching people on their daily errands. I relish Durban's unique theatre and dance scene. I hate the beach. I abhor the itchy, scratchy sensation of sand between my toes. I haven't been to the beach in years. I last swam in the sea when I was ten years old. I'm not too interested in the sea. Its there, I see it most days but I ignore it.

I am a Durban girl even when I am away. To my University friends in Cape Town, I am always defending my hometown. It's not something that I can easily dislodge. Sometimes, I must admit, I'd like to shake the whole city off my back. Abdicating it all, I'd love to leave the crime, the dirt, the politics. But it sticks to me. In New Orleans it confronts me when one of the Mardi Gras parades centres around 'Zulus' who strangely have kangaroos as their mascots. It follows me in Toronto when I go with my younger cousin to see 'The Lion King' and a large number of the supporting cast are from my city. We have a connection. I know where they are from. Yay, I think, they made it out! Out? Do I really feel this way? In New York, I compare (somewhat unfairly) the plethora of international art to our localised art scene back home. In London, I feel closer to home. Everyone knows where and what Durban is.

I am a Durban girl, definitely not a Durban woman. I am not old yet. I see the city through fresh eyes. I haven't committed to Durban yet. I'm still evaluating it as a long-term home. I am a Durban girl who comes from a privileged background. I am white, I am Jewish. I think I understand discrimination. Then again, maybe not. I have access to certain understandings and am blocked from others.

I wasn't born in this city or even this country but my parents were. I have inherited a history of Durban from them. I know stories of the old days when inconceivably my entire family grew up in this city. I've never known what it is to live surrounded by family. We're the only ones left now.

I only know things from my perspective. This may be flawed but it's the only access that I have available. I am typically and atypically a part of this city. Who isn't? This is my story of Durban.

Writing Durban

My story, like any other story, starts from a particular point and has a specific focus. The setting is a southeast African coastal city. The context is postcolonial Africa. The theme centres around culture and identity. In South Africa, it is crucial to start listening to the local stories which are illustrative of our changing times. Telling my story of Durban's identity is important in that, following Annecke and Swilling (2004), storytelling creates spaces of participation – spaces in which others can construct their own personal stories as they negotiate daily life. Annecke and Swilling (2004:295) point out that such stories create spaces “for culture-in-the making – as opposed to ‘making a culture’”. My story thus creates the space in which other stories of Durban can emerge.

An initial concern was how to ‘write’ my Durban story. This issue is resolved by constructing a narrative about Durban which encompasses a progressive, theoretical approach. Hence, this thesis moves away from the traditional theory, method and analysis structure. The rigidity of traditional structures hinders flexibility and inhibits the organic evolution of the argument sans punctuation or interruption. A progressive-theoretical approach to the topic provides a continuous narrative of Durban's urban identity.

The creation of a narrative of Durban's urban identity requires a narrator. It has been increasingly pointed out that the researcher constitutes a kind of storyteller (Annecke & Swilling, 2004; Watson, 2002; McNeill, 1998). This is appealing as it acknowledges the researcher's presence in the text. Importantly, storytelling's “fictional

connotations...makes explicit the positionality of knowledge and the centrality of the academic in providing one of many possible interpretations" (McNeill, 1998:245). This follows Cook and Crang's (cited in McNeill, 1998:243) perception that the researcher is "positioned, interconnected, and involved in the social and cultural relations under study".

In the opening passages of this chapter, I have highlighted my positionality within the text as a white, Jewish female. I do so primarily to acknowledge my mediating presence in the text. While aware of the precarious postcolonial politics associated with the representation of 'Others' (Robinson, 1994), I feel that shying away from cross-cultural research is counter-productive (Simon, 1998; Jacobs, 1996). 'Insider' research is equally limited and geography would be the worse for assuming that only collective or individual self-representation is legitimate (Mather, 1998; Simon, 1998; Robinson, 1994). Thus, following Jacobs (1996), my response is cognisant of a responsibility to anticolonial politics rather than accepting an enforced disengagement because I may not have the 'right' positionality credentials. More recently, Jacobs (2001:731) has highlighted the importance of "an alternative postcolonial politics of listening to the other". In choosing an approach which tries to listen, one must be aware of the representational politics of one's interpretative choices and understand what might be both lost and gained in the telling (Jacobs, 2001).

Choosing which stories to tell in one's narrative involves removing theory as an explicit guide to the research process (McNeill, 1998). It has been argued by postmodern scholars that explanatory accounts linked to theory are modernist conceits (McNeill, 1998). Hence, McNeill (1998) believes that the best option is to incorporate theoretical frames into the empirical. This approach is largely followed in this thesis. No chapter is completely theoretical or completely empirical. Part II provides a strong theoretical platform but in subsequent chapters theory is constantly meshed with the empirical discussion. In the absence of prescriptive theory, themes can, however, be adequately chosen through relating stories to a tight overall theme (in this case, reading Durban as an African city); ensuring themes are 'thick' (i.e. have enough scope to be able to be researched); are balanced and varied; are interesting (in order to provide a new slant on existing theory which would make the final product useful for other researchers working on urban issues); reflect issues of elite power (i.e. certain groups are more influential than others in affecting public discourses); and possess both temporal and spatial scope which allows space to be considered as both a material and

metaphorical site (McNeill, 1998). This thesis follows this approach in its selection of themes and presentation of narrative. As a result, the emergence of particular stories is a messy process which involves “making connections between insights which would suddenly present themselves at inconvenient times and places” (McNeill, 1998:246). Thus, in terms of assembly, McNeill (1998) believes that there should be no rigid framework. In his opinion, “putting together the final product involves a kind of DIY process of experimentation and deletions, the weaving of fragments of newspaper articles with architectural commentary, with personal observations, and so on” (McNeill, 1998:249).

Such an approach relies heavily on qualitative methodologies. Following Aitken (1997), this introduction does not seek to provide a recipe or menu of the methodology utilised in this piece. Rather, the attempt is to reflect the general, qualitative methodological trends which affect this study. According to Eyles (cited in Robinson, 1998a:409), qualitative methods of analysis or “techniques are essentially descriptions of people’s representations and constructions of what is occurring in their world”. In this sense, qualitative techniques are drawn upon to read the different representations and constructions of Durban’s identity and urbanity. The qualitative methodology that this text follows, partially reflects Aitken’s (1997:197) notion of armchair theory and couch-potato geography, which provides “a window to an exciting way of thinking geographically about the world”. Couch-potato geography suggests that given the pressure to “do time in the field”, wonderful opportunities to conduct research in one’s own armchair are lost (Aitken, 1997:197). As a result, couch-potato geography posits that all the data that one may need can be found in a video, book or compact disk (Aitken, 1997). Today, armchairs may be filled with films, videos, art, books, photographs, biographies, diaries, television, maps and students intent on mapping new and exciting geographies.

The primary source materials thus consulted in this thesis includes a range of printed, electronic and audio-visual promotional literature; newspaper, journal and magazine articles; company presentations; official local government plans and documents; diaries and archival sources; dance productions, performance art events, exhibitions, compact disks and librettos; and interviews with key informants. This source material comprises an extensive archive of material on the city of Durban. Non-probability, purposive and snowballing sampling guided the collection of this data. With regard to the interviews, relevant actors and key informants were targeted. The interviews took on a range of formats. Some were interviewed face-to-face. Others were

questioned through telephonic conversations or email correspondence. Respondents were asked intensive, semi-structured and open-ended questions. Questions were necessarily tailored to suit the context. Moreover, the respondents were engaged in conversation, instead of adhering to a set of pre-determined questions (Robinson, 1998a). This allowed scope for elaboration and new material to emerge. Thus, the analytical part of this thesis is based on interrogating the source materials, semi-structured interviews, "as well as on a critical review of available information" (Sreekumar & Parayil, 2002:530). Drawing eclectically on elements from semiology, hermeneutics, deconstruction and discourse analysis, the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' tourism campaign, the uShaka Marine World theme park and various arts activities manifest in Durban are subjected to broad qualitative analyses in order to critically and politically interrogate the various images, representations, metaphors, discursive practices and discourses presented.

Signposting the Way: The Direction of the Narrative

In order to convey my story of Durban, certain structures and frameworks need to be established in order to delineate exactly what kind of a story this is to be. In a way, this endeavour is influenced by the attractive methods of the eighteenth century author Henry Fielding who helpfully signposts the direction which each chapter of his novels is to follow. Situated at the forefront of novel production, Fielding found it necessary to indicate, to those not familiar with the concept of fictional narration, the shape and contours of his endeavour. Similarly, in taking a novel approach to this thesis, it is imperative to orientate the reader's map at the outset in order to ease the journey. In 1747, Fielding (1983:51) introduced Book One of *Tom Jones* with the following preface: "Containing as much of the Birth of the Foundling as is necessary or proper to acquaint the Reader with in the Beginning of this History". In a similar way, this chapter will contain as much background as is necessary or proper to acquaint readers with the city of Durban.

During this process of acquaintance, it is to be remembered that culturally determined city realities form the underlying focus of the present thesis. Fundamentally, the focus is not about the material or economic base of the city. Rather, the lens is more keenly trained on cultural identity in the postcolonial African world of which Durban is a member. Having established this, culture is not distinct from the economy; indeed, dualist thinking has been the subject of criticism (Hudson, 2004; Jackson, 2002; Shields,

1999). Rather, social change is often a response to the intersecting paradigms of capital and culture. Accordingly, the cultures of cities are inseparable from capital imperatives (Zukin, 1995, 1991, 1988).

(D)urban Context

All cities have times and moments. Reading the city is the product of our time. In order to set the scene for the ensuing narrative, an introduction is needed to Durban at this particular juncture. It is important to establish how Durban's current (twelve years after democracy) profile informs its cultural reference points. The urban context not only provides the backdrop and scenery within which Durban's cultural outcomes occur, it also illustrates how varying cultural strategies (such as tourism, urban development, performance art and other artistic genres) employed within the city emerge in response to particular demographic, social, historical and economic factors.

Durban is a bustling entrepôt situated on South Africa's east coast in the province of KwaZulu-Natal¹ (see Figure 1.1). Mutual entanglements have contributed to

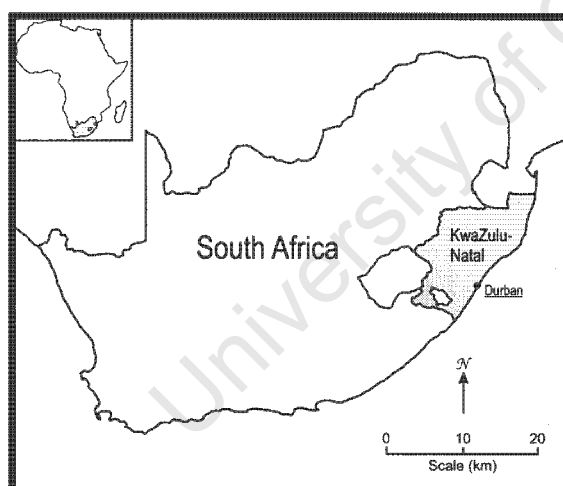


Figure 1.1: Location of Durban

Durban's imbricated social history. As will be illustrated in Chapter 4, Durban has always been a site of co-constituting and creolising identities. Its history of contact, settlement, colonialism and apartheid is complex. The bay area of Durban and its environs has a long history of contact and inhabitation. Early British traders dubiously arranged permission to trade and live in the bay area and its environs (later to become Durban) from Shaka kaSenzangakhona² (Zulu *inkosi*, 1816-1828) in 1824. Formal annexation of

Natal as a British Crown colony only occurred in the mid 1840s (Brookes & Webb, 1965).

¹ Approximately 60% of the province's economic activity takes place in Durban where over a third of KwaZulu-Natal's population lives (eThekweni Municipality, 2004).

² Henceforth referred to as Shaka.

The advent of formal colonialism and immigration from Britain did much to shape Durban's current character. Certainly, both Durban's industry and its capitalist production base are rooted in colonialism. From its origin as trading post, Durban expanded as a colonial port and centre of commercial activity through the latter part of the nineteenth century. Despite the growing impact of colonialism on the separation of the races, British imperatives did much to stimulate the widening of Durban's social fabric. From 1870, indentured agricultural labourers were brought out from India to Durban to work on sugar cane farms. Durban was a place where, in a classically colonial manner, the market brought into contact "a fertile mix of people who created in some respects a common urban culture" (Freund & Padayachee, 2002b:4).

Notwithstanding this, colonial ideologies, based on the separation of races, were later entrenched in Durban by the segregatory legislation of twentieth century apartheid. Indeed, as is pointed out in Chapter 3, Durban is infamous for giving birth to the 'Durban System' – a system predicated on the administration and segregation of black African migrant labour (Swanson, 1976, 1964). Durban has from its inception been implicated in an 'urban' politics of cultural contestation. The legacy of the 'Durban System' has served to entrench the notion that Africa is not urban. Within this context, discursive and material tourist strategies have emerged which use rural images to represent Durban and its identity. Part III highlights how colonial tropes have been reinvented in the marketing of Durban (Chapter 5) and have affected the construction of new urban developments (Chapter 6). Yet in tandem with such strategies, notions of identity and culture, which draw on Durban's mutual entanglements and urban African identity, abound. Certainly, as illustrated in Chapters 7 and 8, there is opportunity to enable an urban renaissance through cultural strategies which seek to landscape Durban's African contours. Of course, these efforts are in turn manipulated by Durban's urban character itself.

It serves to question what kind of city produces the conditions for such competing stories to exist. Certainly, no city is homogenous. However, Durban's particular profile gives some indication of why cultural strategies are so paramount. In all spheres, Durban (and the eThekweni Municipality³) is attempting to reposition itself as a

³ eThekweni (meaning either the open mouth of a lagoon or river; or, a beast or a man with a single testicle [Bryant, 1905]) is the popular isiZulu name for Durban and there is low-grade talk of changing the name of the city. For the present, Durban remains the *de facto* name of the city which is run by the eThekweni Municipality; although, the City Manager, Michael Sutcliffe (Interview, 2003), is quick to politicise the semantics of the city's names. Rather than being

globally competitive world class city. As a result of neoliberal economic policies and the rise of flexible accumulation associated with post-Fordist economic restructuring, the nature of capitalism in Durban has shifted. In accordance with international trends, Durban finds itself operating within a postmodern world of consumption, speculation and 'casino capitalism', pointing to new social velocities and temporalities (Nuttall, 2004). Durban's culture and identity is thus interwoven with, and dependent upon its political economy and social foundations. However, scholars' attention has been traditionally trained on production – given South Africa's history of labour repression – rendering consumption an historical and historiographical orphan (Campbell, 2002). The opportunity exists for South African theorists to explore these new formations of culture which have emerged in response to the political economy (Nuttall, 2004).

The cultural formations outlined in the thesis have thus accompanied a shift in Durban's political economy.⁴ Within this new economic climate, integration into the global economy depends upon how cities market themselves internationally. City marketing (and thus imaging the city or defining its identity) has become of crucial importance for Durban – a city which is aiming to compete globally for investment, trade and tourism (see Chapter 5). Globally, in the context of de-industrialisation, tourism and cultural strategies have been seen as containing the potential to regenerate declining urban economies (Rogerson, 2004, 2003, 2002; Dirsuweit, 1999a). In Durban, as the Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo (Interview, 2004) asserts, there is a new focus on tourism as a key driver of growth.⁵ Tourism is one of the four major sectors of Durban's economy (eThekweni Municipality, 2004).⁶ It contributes an estimated R4.2 billion (in direct spending alone) to Durban's economy, while 12% of employment in the city stems from tourist expenditure (Economic Development Department, 2001). A more recent source suggests that tourism contributes 24% to the local economy (eThekweni Municipality, 2004). From the statistics available, it is difficult to approximate the exact number of tourists that visit the city. The Economic Development Department (2001) estimates that

unique to Durban, other cities across South Africa are also using the indigenous name of their city for their municipality. Hence, Pietermaritzburg is governed by the uMsunduzi Municipality and Pretoria by the Tshwane Municipality (Koopman Interview, 2002b).

⁴ Nel, Hill and Maharaj (2003) offer useful commentary on Durban's post-apartheid economy. See Freund (2002), Jones (2002) and Morris, Barnes and Dunne (2002) for a detailed examination of the evolution of Durban's political economy.

⁵ This is in part a response to the recommendations made by the Monitor Company who were commissioned by local government to prepare a detailed study of Durban's economy (Monitor Company, 2000; Monitor Group and The Durban Unicity, 2000).

⁶ The other sectors include manufacturing, transport and finance.

over 3.5 million tourists (foreign and domestic) visit Durban annually. The KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority (2004) suggests that approximately 828 000 foreign tourists visit Durban annually but they do not have comparable domestic statistics. Regardless of the hazy figures, the perceived potential of tourism (by the eThekweni Municipality) to facilitate world class ambitions is evident in the pouring of capital into tourism related developments around Durban such as the much vaunted 'Golden Triangle' comprised of uShaka Marine World (and the Point Precinct), the International Convention Centre (ICC) and Suncoast Casino & Entertainment World, as well as other mega-projects such as Gateway Theatre of Shopping and Sibaya Casino & Entertainment Kingdom (see Figure 1.2). The eThekweni Municipality also believes that tourism is "an important source of support for cultural industries" as it is concluded that tourists "are interested in

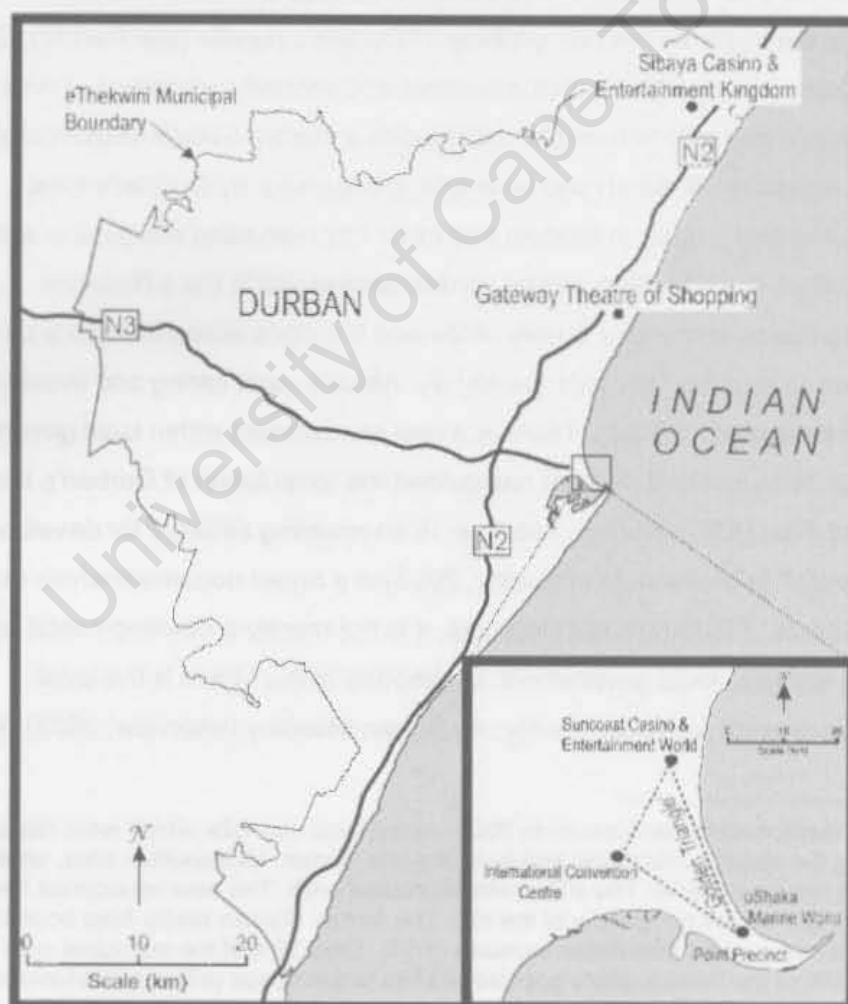


Figure 1.2: Tourism Related Developments in Durban

these industries and have the ability to pay for them" (Economic Development Department, 2001:22). Moreover, the tourism market is a crucial constituent of identity consumption (Visser, 2002). It is this link to tourism which makes the cultural base of the city so important as the subsequent chapters will show.

Certain tourist representations of Durban seek to appropriate the city's ethnic and racial character or cultural base for their own purposes (see Part III). Durban is home to over 3 million people (Statistics South Africa, 2004).⁷ Black Africans comprise the majority of the population and it is this segment of the population that Durban's marketing campaigns and urban developments seek to highlight.⁸ Such strategies, as will be illustrated later, merely serve to reinforce colonially inherited tropes.

Yet, paradoxically, while the eThekweni Municipality supports the reinvention of colonial traditions, it also periodically supports various artistic endeavours within the city that draw on the rich urbanity of Durban's people (see Part IV). Such cultural strategies are enabled within a political and economic climate that encourages entrepreneurship and also values the contribution a vibrant cultural sector could have for the broader economy. While on one level arts sponsorship by Durban's local government has some basis in tourism and other city marketing efforts, it is also partly a speculative effort. Such funding can be contextualised within the eThekweni Municipality's desire to improve quality of life and the city's economic future as well as a sketchy vision to inscribe Durban's identity as "Africa's most caring and liveable city" (eThekweni Municipality, 2002a). There is a real commitment within local government to this inclusive discourse and its spirit has guided the formulation of Durban's Integrated Development Plan (IDP), which in essence, is an enabling strategy for development. Although the IDP (eThekweni Municipality, 2003) is a broad document which deals with the wider aspects of Durban's development, it is not merely a developmental agenda; it is the formal vision of local government. Embedded in this vision is the local government's attempt to shape identity. As Sogen Moodley (Interview, 2003) of the

⁷ This figure needs instant clarification. In 2000, seven local councils, which were responsible for administering the areas surrounding and including the Durban Metropolitan area, were amalgamated into one Unicity: The eThekweni Municipal Area. The new boundaries have fundamentally altered the geography of the city. The former Durban Metro Area boundary swelled by 68% with an associated population increase of 9%. Only 35% of the municipal area is urban in nature; yet, 80% of the municipality's population lives in this space (eThekweni Municipality, 2003).

⁸ As of the 2001 Census, black Africans constitute 68.30% of Durban's total population. Indian/Asians, whites and coloureds constitute 19.90%, 8.98% and 2.82% respectively (Statistics South Africa, 2004).

eThekweni Municipality's Corporate Policy Unit contends, Durban is attempting to be an African city and the IDP is enabling this vision and identity. Moodley (Interview, 2003) illustrates this by referring to his own identity; he observes, by virtue of being a South African of Indian extraction, that eating a bunny chow⁹ with a black African colleague at the BAT Centre¹⁰ is living the spirit of the IDP.

In the post-apartheid redevelopment of Durban, culture has emerged as a key driver of urban development, regeneration and transformation. It is important to recognise the place of concepts like culture and identity in urban policy formation and implementation. The thesis shows that identity is contested and uses key ideas from the literature to highlight the role of different agendas in making the cultural histories that are now being invoked to drive economic change. Thus, the thesis sets out key ideas, traces the origins of cultural identity in Durban and shows why culture is re-emerging as a pivot of economic development within the post-fordist economy in post-apartheid South Africa. The thesis then illustrates this awakening through case studies which highlight different approaches to the construction of identity and urbanity. It is important to remember that the same city gives rise to divergent identities. The city itself is thus a key actor in the shaping of culture. The crucial point here is that urban culture is shaped by and shapes the city.

Like other South African cities, Durban presents a theoretical opportunity; it is neither a global city nor a classic Third World city (Tomlinson et al., 2003b). Instead, it can be profitably thought of as an 'ordinary' city – a city that is modern, diverse, distinctive and creative and in which it is conceivable to imagine (within the boundaries of varying power relations and other contestations) city futures and the distinguishing forms of city-ness (Robinson, 2004a, 2003a, 2002a). Within the neoliberal context of Durban's current phase, it is important to be closely attuned to the cultural manifestations of this ordinary city. It is of crucial importance to pay greater attention to the cultural archives which are undervalued and under-written by geographers, historians and anthropologists (Nuttall, 2004). The city, as a cultural entity, is one such archive. Thus, a reading of Durban from a cultural perspective provides an understanding of how urban cultures shape the city.

⁹ A bunny chow consists of a hollowed out loaf of bread filled with curry. Developed in Durban in response to apartheid's laws which prevented non-whites from eating in restaurants, bunny chows were a convenient take-away which have subsequently become synonymous with Durban.

¹⁰ Arts development complex.

Locating the Narrative

This thesis seeks to provide a reading of an African city – Durban – from a cultural perspective. This thesis is premised on the notion that the city is a specific space with both material and imagined dimensions and, as such, needs to be understood from a variety of perspectives (Lees, 2002; McNeill, 2001; Yeoh, 2001). The intersection of the urban and the cultural in Durban thus forms the prime site of analysis with regards to the present study. Geographers have tentatively devoted their attentions to the urban-cultural nexus within the context of postcolonial cities (Yeoh, 2001; Jacobs, 1996). Within this nexus lies a fertile opportunity for geographers to explore the relationship between culture and the city.

South African urban studies has been a consistently vibrant sub-discipline; notwithstanding this, it has never significantly engaged with the cultural aspects of city life. Work on the South African city has instead tended to be couched within a political economy or a socio-economic perspective (for example, Beall, Crankshaw & Parnell, 2003, 2002; Parnell et al., 2002; Freund & Padayachee, 2002a; Freund, 2001a; Harrison & Todes, 2001; Seekings, 2000; Rogerson, 2000a, 2000b, 1999a, 1999b, 1998; Maharaj & Ramballi, 1998; Parnell, 1997; Maylam & Edwards, 1996; Maylam, 1995; Mabin, 1995, 1992; Parnell & Mabin, 1995; Sapire & Beall, 1995; Smith, 1992). Such endeavours often seek to creatively and productively “shape theoretical work as an act of reconstruction” (Oldfield, Parnell & Mabin, 2004:295). Policy relevance is thus perhaps the dominant motif of contemporary South African urban studies.

This is not to say that the culture-urban nexus is completely ignored. Certainly, there is a growing body of South African literature which connects the urban to the cultural (Minty, 2006; Bremner, 2004; Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004a; Nuttall, 2004; Pieterse & Meintjies, 2004; Carman, 2003; Czeglédy, 2003; Gotz & Simone, 2003; Gunner, 2003; Mpe, 2003; Salo, 2003; Hook & Vrdoljak, 2002; Nuttall & Michael, 2000; Robins, 2000; Judin & Vladislavic, 1998). Likewise, there is another, smaller group of geographers whose culturally inspired work is situated, in different spatial and temporal contexts, within the urban (Popke & Ballard, 2004; Ballard, 2004, 2002a, 2002b; Battersby, 2003; Popke, 2003, 1997; Robinson, 2003b, 2002b; Visser, 2003a, 2003b, 2002; Allen, 2002; Reid & Dirsuweit, 2002; Dirsuweit, 2002, 1999a, 1999b). The work of these geographers tends to be focussed at the micro level. In these accounts, some aspect of the cultural (identity, race, gender) in relation to the urban is subjected to a

detailed but localised analysis. Such projects lead to intricate but micro-scaled understandings. Few geographers have concerned themselves with culture at the city scale.

The current thesis seeks to address this paucity in the literature by treating the city of Durban as a whole. Appreciating Durban at such a scale is enabled via locating an understanding of the city through the culturally inspired theoretical projects of postcolonialism and Africanity. Such an analysis is different and new because it applies cultural modes of analysis at the city scale. It seeks to make a contribution by providing a new cultural take on Durban and its identity. The thesis unfolds by virtue of illustrating different ways of looking at identity and the urban and how identity shapes the urban form and vice versa. Moreover, the thesis seeks to read how different identities are inscribed in the city of Durban, thus producing different narratives of the city. In doing this, the thesis always speaks to more broad theoretical appreciations of the postcolonial, African city. In this manner, it seeks to enlarge geographical concepts that reflect on this spatial and cultural nexus.

Whetting the Appetite

Taking a narrative, progressive-theoretical approach, the following thesis seeks to read Durban, an African city, in terms of its identity and urbanity. It is impossible to read the African city if one has no notion of what an African city and identity means. Thus, the thesis unfolds by virtue of ways of looking at identity and the urban and how the two are mutually constituting – i.e. how the urban shapes identity and vice versa. Accordingly, Part II marries a discussion of the postcolonial diver(C)ity with theorisations of African identity and urbanity. Chapter 2 begins by introducing some general theoretical parameters which frame the discussion of the thesis. This includes an interrogation of postcolonialism, encompassing postcolonial cities, urban identities, multiculturalism and creolisation. Having appreciated these debates in a general, postcolonial fashion, Chapter 3 focuses on one particular postcolonial space: Africa. As such, the chapter considers Africanity and African urbanity in general terms and with particular emphasis on South Africa and Durban. This chapter additionally interrogates how African citizens have historically and discursively been constructed as rural, not urban, subjects.

From this understanding, Part III reads Durban as an African, postcolonial city in terms of the reinvention of colonialism. This Part argues that while Durban's

identity has always been co-constituting, certain representations of Durban choose to reinvigorate partial, stunted colonial tropes in their depiction of the urban. Chapter 4 suggests that early Durban was the site of multiple social interactions. Moreover, the chapter points out Durban's palimpsest nature and suggests that the more Africanised attempts at defining urban identity discussed in Part IV have, in fact, a long history. However, Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate that despite a rich creolising history, Durban is often represented through a dominant discursive-material dualism which proffers a ruralised and stereotypical version of Durban's identity. In this regard, Chapters 5 and 6 examine the discursive and material strategies used to 'sell' Durban and shape its identity and urbanity. Chapter 5 focuses on the discursive strategies used to market Durban as part of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. Chapter 6 illustrates how discursive notions, established by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign, are entrenched in the built environment by flagship projects such as uShaka Marine World.

Part IV offers a counterpoint to the ruralised versions of Durban's identity outlined in Chapters 5 and 6. It suggests that there is a significant opportunity to harness Africanity to urban manifestations of culture. Indeed, Part IV highlights a quiet (D)urban cultural revolution occurring in the city that is simultaneously urban and African. Chapters 7 and 8 attempt to initiate new traditions of reading the postcolonial African city by examining a number of cultural efforts which are reanimating Durban's African identity and transforming its urban space. To this end, Chapter 7 considers graphic design and urban renewal efforts while Chapter 8 discusses site-specific dance, performance art and music. Together, the chapters contend that urban cultural regeneration strategies need not rely on iconic, flagship developments – an important point for policy-makers. Instead, cultural regeneration can occur more organically, leading to a transformed, creolised, African urban landscape. Finally, Chapter 9 summarises and reflects on the entire thesis, concluding with a brief postscript. The narrative of Part IV highlights the substantive opportunity for forging creative and new approaches to the reinvigoration of the urban. Such a reading offers a quintessentially new, vibrant, urban and cultural approach to understanding the African city. Moreover, it creates the space in which other stories of Durban can emerge.

Part II

Theorising the African Diver(C)ity

This story of Durban and its identity begins by attempting to theoretically frame the thesis' subsequent reading of Durban's urban and cultural nexus. Before reading Durban as an African, postcolonial city in the forthcoming chapters, it is of consequence to delve into the broader theoretical considerations of postcolonialism and Africanity paying particular attention to how identity and the urban are mutually constituting. In view of such a project, Part II presents a discussion of the African diver(C)ity.

Such a deliberation approaches the city from a cultural perspective. Treating cities as objects of cultural analysis is fast gaining recognition. Bearing in mind the myriad cultural texts and practices which write into and on to the city, Nuttall (2004:740) suggests that the city offers itself as an archive from which "its cultural dimensions as *city life and form*" can be examined. Moreover, probing the city as a cultural archive can destabilise commonly accepted readings of Africa and its urbanity (Nuttall & Mbembe, 2004b). The link between culture and urbanity has yet to be fully developed at the city scale. Certainly, there is much to be said about the relationship between the city, identity and Africanity.

Chapter 2 thus facilitates the discussion of the relationship between the city and identity by considering the nature of postcolonialism and its application to the city. In particular, the chapter invokes the urban as a key site of the postcolonial. Chapter 2 argues that the urban plays a crucial role in drawing together the themes of postcolonialism, multiculturalism and creolisation, in the process emphasising the co-constituting nature of identity and urban space. The consideration of postcolonial urbanity allows greater understanding of the cultural politics of identity and space. In Part III, the thesis uses these ideas to look at the creolised origins of Durban and the manner in which Durban's identity has been substantially reinvented in the present in accordance with partial, colonial tropes and stereotypes. Moreover, ideas of postcolonial urbanity are furthered in Part IV where notions regarding how Durban is landscaped by cultural practitioners are discussed.

Following on from the theorisations of Chapter 2 which treat identity and culture in a general, postcolonial manner, Chapter 3 focuses more specifically on African space. Chapter 3 considers the intricate nature of African identity and urbanity. The chapter discusses how the legacy of the 'Durban System' has predicated a system of representation which hinders urban depictions of African cities. The lasting effects of the 'Durban System' has so entrenched the notion that Africa is not urban that it is easier in some cases to represent African cities, such as Durban, with recourse to rural images. Chapters 5 and 6 of Part III pick up on these notions of the anti-urban depiction of Durban through their interrogation of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' tourism campaign and the uShaka Marine World theme park development. However, as Chapter 3 illustrates, the African city has the potential to be linked to more vibrant and exciting manifestations of culture. Following on from the theoretical considerations of Chapter 3, Part IV attempts to further the debate on African urbanity by suggesting new and creative approaches to reinvigorating the urban in the African context.

While the theory discussed in Part II is developed with regard to the reading of the African city of Durban in particular, it also speaks more widely to African cities elsewhere. Part II, while providing the bulk of the thesis' theory, also initiates this thesis' story about the intersection of the urban and cultural. Part II thus frames and underscores the proceeding narration and marks the first point of departure in the larger progressive narrative of this thesis.

2

Diver(C)ity: Reading The Postcolonial City

"postcolonial society is a hybrid space where various traditions encounter one another with results that are often explosive but more often left in an uneasy and unresolved state. Postcolonial reality is a contested reality, and the postcolonial city features a contested geography" (Kurtz, 1998:85).

Introduction

At the outset of this narrative journey, which seeks to read Durban's identity as a diverse African city, it is important to appreciate the mutually constituting nature of urbanity and identity. Any project attempting to expand on the urban-cultural nexus must bring some relevant conceptual and pragmatic tools to bear in order to understand this close relationship. For the purpose of this thesis, a foundational concept amplified and employed in the literature of cultural studies and cultural geography, namely, postcolonialism, has particular relevance. Theories of postcolonialism and its sub-theme: multiculturalism, can be profitably applied in the urban context and adopted in the analysis of both material and imagined postcolonial sites. Indeed, the urban constitutes a key site of the postcolonial. The discussion of postcolonial urbanism in this chapter serves to appreciate more closely the cultural nuances and contestations attendant to identity and urban space. Before arriving at such a discussion, it is necessary to conceptually trace the literature on postcolonialism in general, paying attention to the contribution postcolonialism has made to the study of identity. On a pragmatic level, the discussion of multiculturalism presented illuminates the problems and possibilities for planning for, and encompassing diversity in urban environments. It also highlights how urbanity and identity are interlinked. The argument outlined lays the foundation for the exploration of urban identities in general in order to critique more specifically, in the following chapter, the contested identities of African cities. Moreover, the debates established here frame the competing versions of Durban's urban identity that are outlined in Parts III and IV.

***Postcolonialism: Theory and Debates*¹**

Postcolonial scholarship provides a valuable corpus of theory for South African geographers interested in comprehending contemporary cultural, urban realities. Postcolonialism provides many theoretical pointers useful for the study of the urban as a site of cultural contestation. Postcolonialism refers “to a body of theory or set of approaches” which offers a predominantly “cultural perspective on contemporary societies and cultures, in particular those that have negotiated – and continue to negotiate – a history of colonialism” (Brooks, 2001a:1). In its most useful form, “postcolonialism denotes a range of critical perspectives on the diverse histories and geographies of colonial practices, discourses, impacts and, importantly, their legacies in the present” (Nash, 2002:221). Of importance here is postcolonialism’s consideration of how identities are formed and represented (Thornton, 2000). A broad theoretical deliberation of the parameters of postcolonialism will provide a suitable context for the later examination of the city of Durban and the cultural manifestations of its identity. Thus, a brief discussion of the general definitions, debates and tensions that infuse postcolonial studies follows.

Postcolonialism is a hotly contested, highly elastic notion that is used widely in various contexts and applications (Blunt & McEwan, 2002; Quayson, 2000; Williams & Chrisman, 1994). There is dissension over the term’s scope and applicability. Debate rages over which places, spaces, societies and identities are postcolonial. In addition, there is much rumination as to whether the term necessarily refers to the period immediately following the cessation of formal colonialism. Some go as far as to assert that the postcolonial “proclamation of the importance of hybridity, difference and heterogeneity may paradoxically serve to compress and homogenize distinct eras, arenas, and regimes of colonialism and postcolonialism” (Sole, 2000:235). The vague use of the term has meant that there is a danger of the term imploding and losing its meaning (Weate, 2003; Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin [cited in Sidaway, 2002, 2000]; Moore-Gilbert, 1997).

To illustrate the above point, Moore-Gilbert (1997) explores five senses in which Canada can be termed postcolonial. The example of Canada serves to suggest just how multifaceted and tangled the term has become in terms of its spatial, political, temporal and socio-cultural meanings. These five senses encompass: 1) the legacy of a

¹ This section partially revisits some of theoretical arguments presented in Bass (2001).

culturally and politically dependent relationship with Britain; 2) the cultural, political and economic domination of the United States over Canada; 3) the fact that Quebec is viewed by some as an oppressed culture or a nation within Anglophone Canada; 4) the predicament of indigenous people who predated white colonialism; 5) the arrival of contemporary Third World Asian migrants to Canada. This Canadian illustration suggests that there are many different degrees, forms and histories of colonisation and consequently postcolonialism. Rather than viewing this negatively, Sidaway (2002, 2000) counters that perhaps postcolonialism's multiple, provisional and open meanings should be celebrated. It is unnecessary to be narrow and exclusive in defining the ambit of postcolonialism. In fact, Nash (2002:228) argues that postcolonialism should remain a provisional and contested term because partial understandings and unsettling effects are "more in the spirit of postcolonialism than security and old certainties". The partial and contested meanings of postcolonialism are invoked later in the literature on the postcolonial city.

For now, internal debates, which bear unravelling, centre on recent controversies between postcolonial theory and postcolonial criticism. Postcolonial theory is defined as work which is predominantly shaped by methodological affinities with the French 'high' theory of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Jacques Lacan. Postcolonial theory is dominated by the work of Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Homi Bhabha whose theories are informed by the French 'high' theorists. French 'high' theory's intrusion into postcolonial analysis has generated much debate. There are two types of critiques of postcolonial theory. The first comes from traditionally conservative historians and the second is effectively a critique from within; i.e. from those based in the Third World (Moore-Gilbert, 1997).

Historians Russell Jacoby and John MacKensie spearhead the former group. These academics believe that postcolonial theory is politically radical and fails to adequately comprehend both imperial history and historiography. Jacoby (cited in Moore-Gilbert, 1997) critiques the interdisciplinary yearnings of postcolonial theory, suggesting that postcolonial theorists' departure from literary studies into the fields of political economy, anthropology, history and sociology lack serious engagement in the questions of history and culture.

Viewing postcolonial theory as conservative in both its effects and ideas, Aijaz Ahmad leads the second group of critics who radically critique postcolonial theory from within (Moore-Gilbert, 1997). In this view, postcolonial theory is viewed as deeply

conservative and even, at times, neocolonial. In the view of Ahmad's critical grouping, it is contended that postcolonial critics are removed from the material realities of the Third World as they are more often than not physically located in the West. For example, Edward Said resided in the United States of America and taught at Columbia University (Higgins, 2001). These postcolonial theorists reproduce, in an academic context, globalisation's international division of labour in that the Third World provides 'primary' (cultural) material which is utilised and manipulated (by these theorists) into a refined product (for monetary gain). This leads to a reinscription of the West's traditional cultural authority. Similarly, Tiffin (cited in Moore-Gilbert, 1997) views postcolonial theory as a new method of 'othering' people which contributes to new forms of neocolonial exploitation. Rather cynically, Tiffin (cited in Moore-Gilbert, 1997:21) observes that postcolonial theory is repressive and "serves as District Commissioner of the 1980s, his book title now changed from *The Pacification of the Primitive Tribes of the Lower Niger* to *Enjoying the Other: or Difference Domesticated*". Finally, it is argued that Western cultural criticism is detached from popular political struggles and has been since the 1960s (Moore-Gilbert, 1997). In effect, it is unclear how postcolonial theory has substantially improved both scholarship and contemporary realities.

The postcolonial criticism camp is mainly concerned with literary criticism. Specifically, postcolonial criticism has been preoccupied with the investigation of Western culture – particularly the English literature canon – and its complicity in the values and attitudes underpinning imperial expansion (Moore-Gilbert, 1997). This usage of postcolonialism is quite limiting and, as evidenced from the explosion of postcolonial criticism in other disciplines, is not entirely correct. More broadly, postcolonial criticism could encompass anything that is critical of colonialism. Having said all this, Moore-Gilbert (1997:2) is cautious not to essentialise the distinction between the two opposing camps of theory and criticism; rather, he suggests that "both sub-fields of analysis must be understood as plural in assumption, orientation and procedure, and are at times internally as well as mutually contradictory". After all, postcolonialism is a cross-disciplinary field representing an "iconoclastic act of geographical and historical bridging" (Brooks, 1997:238). While the debate rages, perhaps there is not a huge chasm between postcolonial theory and postcolonial criticism. The divide is not absolute and useful ideas and contributions can be garnered from both.

Ranger (1996) considers these points in his discussion of postcolonialism. In his view, postcoloniality has three different meanings. Firstly, it has been defined as

the arrival in the First World of Third World spokespersons and identities (like Said, Spivak and Bhabha) who expand knowledge of Third World realities. In this version, postcoloniality is viewed as the Third World conveying its realities and perspectives to the First World. In its second meaning, postcoloniality is treated as a self-reflexive research methodology that reflects on the researcher's positionality relative to that of those researched (see also Robinson, 1994). Such a methodology privileges certain problematics and methods which subvert or undermine imperial science's rationality. The third meaning is descriptive, alluding to the period following decolonisation. According to this meaning, postcoloniality is thus seen to refer simply to the contemporary state of ex-imperial or ex-colonial societies (Ranger, 1996). This approach uses the term 'postcolonial' to describe a condition, referring to societies, peoples and states that have experienced formal decolonisation (Sidaway, 2002, 2000).

Simon (1998) also classifies the traditional meaning of postcolonialism into three main understandings. Accordingly, postcolonialism can be understood as a particular problematic or research method, as an epoch, or as a form of expression and identity. Postcolonial expressions and identities can be identified in postcolonial national symbols and materialities (e.g. monuments, flags, place-names, parliament buildings and the erection of new capital cities such as Brasilia in Brazil) and in the emergence of new cultural forms and artistic styles which are indicative of new or reinvigorated social and individual identities. This last meaning assumes crucial relevance for this thesis which will consider, in forthcoming chapters, postcolonial identities as they are materialised in the city.

Young (2001) provides a more radical perspective of postcolonialism which is politically transformative and interventionist. To him, postcolonialism or 'tricontinentalism'² as he prefers to call it "combines the epistemological cultural innovations of the postcolonial moment with a political critique of the conditions of postcoloniality" (Young, 2001:57). Postcolonialism/ tricontinentalism not only "attacks the status quo of hegemonic economic imperialism, and the history of colonialism and imperialism, but also signals an activist engagement with positive political positions and new forms of political identity" (Young, 2001:58).

² The term tricontinental refers to the collective of Latin America, Africa and Asia. It has its roots in the Havana Tricontinental of 1996 which marked the alliance of the three continents against imperialism. Tricontinentalism is not so much a substantial shift in postcolonial theory as it is a shift in semantics.

Despite the range in postcolonialism's meanings, Ranger (1996) laments the general paucity of historical depth in postcolonial studies and motivates for more intricate and complicated histories. Postcolonialism is too often isolated from its colonial context and it is harmful to view postcolonialism as a distinct entity (Ranger, 1996). Indeed Robinson (2003c) suggests that it is most optimistic to define the contemporary period as postcolonial. Contemporary forms of imperialism persist, indicating the fallacy of the notion that the colonial is historically separated from the postcolonial (McClintock, 1994). Many agree that postcolonialism is intertwined with colonial formations (Robinson, 2003d; Nash 2002; Jackson & Jacobs, 1996; Jacobs, 1996). The colonial continuities inherent in postcolonialism assume a more critical shade in neocolonial debates. Neocolonialism refers to current, mainly economic (but also may include cultural, political or linguistic) measures to dominate, influence or control former colonies (Young, 2001). Neocolonialism takes effect in the sense that, in the guise of globalisation, colonialism both persists and is reworked (Nash, 2002). Neocolonialism as an economic exploitation is most disempowering and leads to lack of agency. However, Jacobs (1996:14) observes that "colonial constructs not only belong to a past that is being worked against in the present, but also to a past that is being nostalgically reworked and inevitably adapted in the present". This insight is picked up in Part III where it is illustrated how the colonial past is reinvented in Durban. In this regard, in the same way that postcolonialist tendencies are produced by colonialism, "colonialist tendencies necessarily inhabit often optimistically designated postcolonial formations" (Jacobs, 1996:14-15). As will be illustrated later, certain versions of Durban's identity are unwittingly shaded by colonial tropes.

It is in this sense that the postcolonial can be used most usefully in aesthetic, political and theoretical ways to expose, critique, counter, deconstruct and transcend both the cultural and broader ideological presences and legacies of imperialism (Sidaway, 2002, 2000). Postcolonial perspectives can make important contributions to the understanding of power, space and identity (Blunt & McEwan, 2002). In this regard, the politics of identity is a major area of research of postcolonial studies – a subject highly relevant for the purposes of this thesis. Identity is understood to be relative. Identities are not viewed as natural or given and have no universal or essential qualities. Instead, identities are constantly negotiated, re-negotiated and the products of multiple discourses (Barker, 2000). Culture has a large influence on the construction and production of identity (Hall, 1995). In addition, identity is intricately related to place,

power and space (Massey & Jess, 1995). Identity is thus imbricated in spatial politics. Accordingly, Crang (1998) suggests that identities be defined by virtue of relationships that occur over space. Territorial identities thus exist in relation to other spatialised identities (Crang, 1998).

While the colonial period was a time of distortion of identities through power, it was also a source of hybridity in that Third World and First World cultures necessarily mixed (although it may be argued that hybridity already existed in Africa as a result of the mixing of various African cultures for hundreds of years). Thus, by no means were colonial identities monolithic or exclusive. Moreover, Ranger (1996) contends that 'ethnicity' is a colonial invention. Certainly, "under colonialism bounded ethnicities replaced previously much more fluid, multicultural and multilingual networks of interaction and identity" (Ranger, 1996:174). 'Ethnic groups' did not exist in precolonial times; rather, independent political units were predominant. Colonisation brought about a break down in the indigenous social order. Old political units were reorganised into new social categories related to the colonisers and their new types of economic transactions. In some cases, like the Congo, contemporary power is derived, not by virtue of precolonial slave-based states but rather from colonial ethnic reorganisation. Moreover, both physical and cultural violence under colonialism severed postcolonial equatorial Africa most decisively from its precolonial culture. Later, through the transition to independence, colonialism's dynamics remained. Migrant labour, modernising programs of agrarian reform and systems of government were inherited and reactivated. Hence, "Colonial Africa was much more like postcolonial Africa than most of us have hitherto imagined. And its dynamics have continued to shape postcolonial society" (Ranger, 1996:280). A richer tapestry needs to be woven, encompassing continuity and change, divergence and synthesis, creolisation and hybridisation, dissolution and conservation (Simon, 1998; Ranger, 1996).

Werbner (1996:1) points out that there are "many identities mobilized in the postcolonial politics of everyday life". There are numerous ways in which identities are transformed, multiplied and circulated (Werbner, 1996). Postcolonial identities, like all identities, are socially constructed. There are continuities and discontinuities of identity from the pre-colonial to postcolonial eras. While colonialism disrupted pre-colonial identities, it also created new identities (Ranger, 1996). Identity must be viewed as "open-ended, fluid and constantly in a process of being constructed and reconstructed as the subject moves from one social situation to another, resulting in a

self that is highly fragmented and context-dependent" (Zegeye, 2001a:1). Postcolonial identities are undoubtedly complex. Williams and Chrisman (1994:373) remark that this complexity "arises as much from the immense geo-political range included in the category of the 'post-colonial' as from the inner dynamics of post-colonial selves".

Williams and Chrisman (1994) further their argument by conflating the theorisation of postcolonial cultural discourses and identities. In this regard, they argue that when approaching contemporary postcolonial discourses, a range of postcolonial constituencies should be considered from literature, music, visual art and film. It is also important to pay attention to the postcolonial cityscape itself – as the following chapters will do in depth. Media, such as those listed, should be materially dissected in order to discover to what extent these are representative of postcolonial formations and identities. Radcliffe (1996:25) adds, "imagining the postcolonial state rests upon discourses about its population, about its terrain, and about its history". She argues that both discursive and visual imaginings of space and place are crucial in the understanding of postcolonial states and their cultural identities (Radcliffe, 1996).

Some postcolonial scholars reference their research on postcolonial identities from a political economy perspective. In this vein, economics and economic processes are seen as still being inextricably linked to patterns of class and racial stratification. In order to understand these processes and stratifications, postcolonial scholars should "analyse race as a category inserted within historically changing forms and local contexts; articulate it with other categories of social and psychic identity and trace its constant redeployment into new ideological forms" (Sole, 2000:237). Furthermore, some perceive that too much emphasis is given to the cultural in postcolonial analysis. The privileging of the cultural over the economic is seen to be a particular flaw of the postcolonial project (Sole, 2000).

Despite caveats to the extent to which cultural interpretations hold precedence in postcolonial studies, it is clear that cultural analyses are relatively new and exciting avenues of research for human geographers (see Nash, 2002). Indeed, many geographers are contributing to the postcolonial debate. Cultural geographers have found postcolonialism useful as a framework to deploy in writing critically about space, place, identity and culture; for, as Nash (2002:219) puts it, "there are obvious crosscurrents between cultural geography, postcolonial studies and other work on cultural identities, processes, practices, politics and social divisions". Indeed, "postcolonialism as a theoretical framework and substantive direction is a significant

feature of recent work in cultural geography, and critical geography more widely" (Nash, 2002:219). Both imperialism and colonialism are closely linked to the geographical project. Indeed, Said (1993:271) has observed that colonialism is an act of geographic violence "through which virtually every space in the world is explored, chartered and finally brought under control". This idea has received a great deal of attention from geographers. Much of this interest on maps and mapping was initiated by Carter's (1987) 'spatial history' of Australia. This work illustrates the role that spatial technologies (exploring, surveying, mapping and naming) have with regards to the colonial appropriation of land. It thus underscores the important connections between colonialism and geography.

Thus, postcolonial theories and frameworks have become increasingly important for geographers. In particular, Clayton (2001:749) – in a discussion piece (written in response to comments made about his book) drawing on Berg (2001), Demeritt (2001), Jacobs (2001) and Mills (2001) – identifies "postcolonial-geographical lines of inquiry" as forms of inquiry that:

- 1) try to theorise and document multiple, fragmented and contradictory spaces of identity occupied by both white settlers and indigenous peoples
- 2) work with theory in practical and grounded ways
- 3) are in tune with the discordant postcolonial politics of places
- 4) acknowledge that colonial studies "work as situated knowledges that stem from, and feed into, particular sites of study, learning and memory" (Clayton, 2001:749)
- 5) work at a variety of scales and integrate the local with the global
- 6) treat contact as an intersubjective (two-way) process and consider the agency (contradictory or not) of all parties involved in colonial encounters
- 7) write about the archival record in a way that questions and transforms understandings of the present
- 8) is responsible to the concept of 'otherness' and has an anti-colonial effect.

Moreover, Clayton (2001:750) observes that a certain "value-coding of postcolonial geography" is apparent which "points to a more recent and broadly interdisciplinary sensitivity to issues of difference, representation and the spatiality of power and identity". Clayton (2001) suggests that his pointers do not constitute a template for postcolonial geography but rather a contribution to more general postcolonial-geographical ways of

thinking. Clayton (2001) surmises that the way in which geographers envision the postcolonial is crucial to the meaningfulness and worth of their studies.

Sidaway (2002, 2000) is one geographer who undertakes such an envisioning by presenting a speculative, partial and tentative geography of the complicated and varied senses, as well as the non-senses, of postcolonial geographies. The term 'postcolonial' has appeared in a range of different human geography texts ranging from Blunt and Rose (1994), Crush (1994, 1993), Jacobs (1996) and Simon (1998, 1989) to name a few. Some of the complexity of the use of the postcolonial in geography stems from the discipline's somewhat tenuous links with the imperial project. For geographers this means a continuing attention to the fact that geography is intrinsically, philosophically and institutionally marked as both a colonial and a western science. Sidaway (2002:27, 2000:606) cautions that seeking a straightforward recipe for postcolonial geography "reproduces something of the epistemological drive of the colonial project itself". Indeed, as Sidaway (2002:27, 2000:606) reminds, "creating and completing rational, universal knowledge about the world (earth-writing) was among the quests of colonialism". However,

at their best and most radical, postcolonial geographies will not only be alert to the continued fact of imperialism, but also thoroughly uncontainable in terms of disturbing and disrupting established assumptions, frames and methods.

Between the encouragement to rethink, rework and recontextualise (or... 'deconstruct') 'our' geographies and the recognition of the impossibility of such reworked geographies entirely or simply escaping their ('western') genealogies and delivering us to some postcolonial promised land, are the space for forms and directions that will at the very least *relocate* (and perhaps sometimes radically dislocate) familiar and often taken for granted geographical narratives (Sidaway, 2000:606-607).

In addition, geographers must remain aware that postcolonial conditions are inherently varied and multiple. Geographers must recognise that an absolute focus on colonialism and its ramifications most probably will marginalise other (pre-modern) histories. While connecting threads to these histories are prevalent in all kinds of 'revivals', spectres and invented 'traditions', these tend to appropriate the past in quasi-mythical ways. Furthermore, it is important to remember that postcolonial critiques do not provide simple answers for complex practical and theoretical issues. Instead, postcolonial critiques "open layers of questions about what underpins and is taken for

granted in western geographical narratives and how they have been inextricably entangled with the world they seek to analyse and mistaken for self-contained, universal and external truths" (Sidaway, 2000:607). Despite all its limitations, the multiple paradoxes stemming from geographical encounters with the postcolonial can assist in raising awareness of what it means to confront difference and to revisit what one thinks one knows (Sidaway, 2002, 2000).

Geographers have realised that successful engagement in the field of postcolonial studies requires cross-disciplinary conversation. While this may provoke some measure of anxiety, it is clear that research can only benefit from stretching beyond the comfort of disciplinary boundaries and traditions (Brooks, 1997). Notwithstanding this, geography itself has an important role to play. Thrift (2002) contends that geography's contribution to postcolonialism is increasingly relevant in contemporary times. Events surrounding the attack on the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001 have lead to many geopolitical shifts. Thrift (2002:294) argues that the literature on postcolonialism – which geographers have contributed so much to – is particularly useful here, seen as a series of mediations on what kinds of identities might be able to both assert their existence and reach out to others in a world in which crossing cultures has become normal and in which, as a result, very few cultures are therefore able to be described as separate, bounded and uniform.

It is important to assess how these broader concerns of postcolonialism in general and the more specific usage of the notion in geography relates to South African geography. Such a task is necessary in order to determine its suitability as a theoretical framework for contemporary South African research. In McClintock's (1994) opinion, South Africa is a break-away settler colony (along with Australia, Canada, the United States and New Zealand). According to McClintock (1994), break-away settler colonies are formally independent; yet, colonial control has been diverted from the founding, imperial country to the colony. Break-away colonies may themselves become imperial or sub-imperial powers as is evident by the United States' role in the Americas or, more pertinently, South Africa's role in Namibia (Sidaway, 2002, 2000).

Thornton (1996:136) argues however that "the current moment in South Africa...is not postcolonial". In his view, apartheid constituted South Africa's postcolonial period. Additionally, Thornton (1996) contends that apartheid was modernistic in design and purpose. Thus, if apartheid was characteristic of postcoloniality and modernity, then

post-apartheid South Africa is indicative of postmodernity rather than postcoloniality. On the other hand, it is possible to conceive of South Africa as being simultaneously postmodern and postcolonial (Simon, 1998). As a result, bringing a postcolonial theoretical emphasis to bear on South Africa is entirely appropriate. Indeed, Crush (1994, 1993) has commented on the profitability of engaging South African geography and postcolonial scholarship in dialogue. Certainly cultural politics in South Africa are “now very postcolonial in terms of recognising previously marginalised and oppressed groups and fostering new hybrid creolised identities” (Simon, 1998:241). Indeed, postcolonialism issues the challenge to study the entanglements, complexities and multiplicities of “previously opposed spheres” (Anderson, 2000:388).

The ambivalence of negotiating previously opposed spheres is captured in reading South Africa as an ‘uncanny’ space. Sigmund Freud (1917-1919) first coined the notion of the ‘uncanny’ which he explains in terms of the intersection of the two German terms: *unheimlich* (strange, unfamiliar, unhomely and inaccessible) and *heimlich* (familiar, homely and free from fear). Thus, an uncanny experience occurs when, due to the interweaving of the familiar and the unfamiliar, one feels simultaneously ‘in place’ and ‘out of place’. Gelder and Jacobs (1998, 1995) suggest that the resultant anxiety is related to the sense that both the familiar and the unfamiliar seem to inhabit each other. In this view, neither scientific knowledge nor “national categories of the state...determine both belonging and unbelonging, but rather linked sets of political insights, memories, subjectivities, projections of fantasmatic desires and great long chains of sliding signifiers” (Rogoff, 2000:7).

The uncanny can be experienced collectively as a nation (Wilton, 1998). In Australia, the implications of uncanny senses of belonging brought about by Aboriginal land claims and Australia’s shifting position with relation to its Asian-Pacific neighbours have been the subject of inquiry (Gelder & Jacobs, 1998, 1995; Schech & Haggis, 1998). As in Australia, uncanny connections to place are numerous in South Africa. Intertwined with the demise of apartheid, rural/ urban land claims and Zimbabwean land politics, the familiarity of home has been rendered unfamiliar and strange.

In order to negotiate these complex, uncanny emotions, Gelder and Jacobs (1998:24) comment that Australians often imagine a (future) condition of ‘reconciliation’, and indeed, a great deal has been invested in the packaging of this image as a means of selling it to the nation

– but the ‘uncanny’ can remind us of just how irreconcilable this image is with itself. It is not simply that Australians will either be reconciled with each other or they will not; rather, these two possibilities (reconciliation; the impossibility of reconciliation) coexist and flow through each other in what is often, in our view at least, a productively unstable dynamic.

Such an insight is of relevance in South Africa where discourses of ‘reconciliation’ abound in popular culture. Moreover, it opens up understandings of the open constellation of identities which need to be encompassed within the space of the city and the built environment. In talking about postcolonial spaces, one should eschew the language of resolution and reconciliation, of national unity or polarised difference in favour of a language that speaks of flux, interaction, change and the production of varying and contested spatial identities (Nash, 2002).

Such a language is indicative of postcolonialism and one that is drawn on throughout the course of this thesis. Postcolonialism is useful in that it offers critical perspectives on the unstable production and construction of racialised stereotypes and identities as well as on the contestation of such stereotypes and identities (Jackson & Jacobs, 1996). In terms of this thesis, such critical perspectives are brought to bear in the analysis of the construction and production of stereotypical, ruralised versions of Durban’s identity in Part III; and, the contestations of these versions of identity and the feeling towards an urban, Africanised identity in Part IV.

Having appreciated the key debates within postcolonial studies, paying particular attention to geographical-postcolonial lines of enquiry, it is apposite to introduce ‘the urban’ here as a critical site of the postcolonial and an important focus of geographical postcolonial writing. Postcolonialism provides fertile ground for urbanists in Africa seeking to understand the linkages between identity and urbanity. As the narrative later points out, it is at the city scale that there is scope for bringing new lenses to the postcolonial project.

Postcolonial Cities

Postcolonialism’s dynamics are most strongly apparent in the space of the city and lend a unique character to those spaces (Kurtz, 1998). The interplay between the urban and identity is perhaps nowhere more pronounced than in the postcolonial city. The intensity of experience ensures that the city is host to a multitude of contested identity politics which shape the urban form. In this way, the city materially

scripts its form and discursively frames its identity. This is a constant and iterative process making the urban a key site of the postcolonial. From this point of analysis, it is of immediate concern to delve into the general literature on postcolonial cities. The argument presented is eclectic – its intention is not only to provide theoretical points of departure but also to substantially invoke the literature of the way in which identity is inscribed by the city and the writing of cultural baggage on to the city.

Older scholarship tends to approach cities with a history of colonialism from a political economy approach (King, 1989; Simon, 1989). Of chief concern is “colonial urbanism and urbanization and its role in the development of the capitalist world economy” (King, 1989:1). Little attention, in this literature, is paid to the impact of culture and identity on the urban form. In the late eighties, scholars considered postcolonial cities merely as the derivatives of colonial cities which *de facto* amounted to all Third World cities (Simon, 1989). Simon’s (1989) paper is poised on the precipice of postcolonial scholarship on cities. Peering into the future, he ponders the use of the postcolonial and the extent to which globalisation will render the term impotent as an analytical construct. Despite this, Simon (1989) predicts that the examinations of ex-colonial cities will have much value.

While much work has been conducted since, the sub-discipline is still under-researched. Much more effort is needed to produce a postcolonial, urban, geographical sub-discipline (Robinson, 2002a). Driver and Gilbert (cited in Yeoh, 2001:462) observe that few studies investigate “the diverse relations between imperial culture and the production, consumption and representation of [all kinds of] urban space,...architectural, spectacular, performative and lived”. Uniting these theoretical concerns, Yeoh (2001) deftly summarises the literature on postcolonial cities. She observes that geographers are well positioned to interrogate and confer the complex intricacies of the postcolonial debate onto urban spaces which contain both material and imagined dimensions.

Philo (cited in Lees, 2002) points to the need to balance both the material and immaterial aspects of city life. Philo (cited in Lees, 2002) displays anxiety that urban geography’s growing preoccupation with cultural processes that are immaterial eschew more tangible, material geographical studies. But, argues Donald (cited in McNeill, 2001), the city is, above all else, a representation. Notwithstanding this, according to Lees (2002), ‘new’ urban geography straddles and is located at the cutting edge of research which links the material and immaterial. Accordingly, “urban geographers

continually have to deal with material space(s) – the city and urban spaces – and their representation” (Lees, 2002:109). Likewise, Soyez (2002) is convinced that both material and representational aspects are intrinsic to more complex understandings of the urban landscape. In this sense, Lees (2002) argues that the contribution of urban discourses to processes of spatial restructuring is significant. This kind of approach indicates “the possibilities and limitations for cultural forms to influence urban spatial practices” (Mele, cited in Lees, 2002:106). Such an approach is useful in this thesis in Part III, where the potential of cultural discourses (such as those promulgated by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu') to effect urban development (like uShaka Marine World) is explored. Moreover, it highlights the close relationship between the material and the immaterial. Both are intertwined. Thus, in a two-way process, the material (urban) constructs the immaterial (identity/ culture) and vice versa.

Reading the imagined and real spaces of the city from a postcolonial perspective facilitates productive insights. Geographers studying postcolonial cities are extremely well situated to grasp both the substance and the critique. In this manner, they can easily avoid “the navel-gazing tendencies of certain forms of postcolonial studies, which seem reluctant to go much further beyond theorizing ‘the meaning of the hyphen in post-coloniality’” (Yeoh, 2001:457). Nevertheless, like postcolonialism itself, postcolonial cities defy easy definition. Both previously colonised cities as well as the centres of colonial power have borne this appellation. It becomes clear, however, that cities are not rendered postcolonial by their sovereignty. A city is not postcolonial by virtue of previously imperial rule. Rather, the key feature of postcolonial cities is identity. Indeed, the postcolonial city is often cited “as an important site where claims of an identity different from the colonial past are expressed and indexed, and, in some cases, keenly contested” (Yeoh, 2001:458). Identity politics are thus paramount.

The city is often bombarded with representational spaces that attempt to produce an ideal postcolonial citizen. Urban architecture, associated urban forms and renaming city sites have emerged as social and political means of representation, mediating the postcolonial present and the colonial past. Crucially, as will be indicated later in this thesis, postcolonial “strivings for a new identity do not completely banish the colonial past but involve the selective retrieval and appropriation of indigenous and colonial cultures to produce appropriate forms to represent the postcolonial present” (Yeoh, 2001:459). The postcolonial urban form is also imbricated in the politics of colonialism. In most places of former colonial infiltration, residential segregation remains,

contributing to an uneven texture of urban life. This spatial reality is a physical barrier to re-creating postcolonial nations; indeed, the process is painful and slow. Postcolonial cities trace “continuity rather than disjuncture from its colonial predecessor in the nature and quality of social encounters, which are shot through with notions of ‘race’ and ‘culture’ as markers of difference and bases for interaction” (Yeoh, 2001:460). This observation is true of Durban where the urban space shows continuities with its colonial past. In such a context, past notions of ‘race’ and ‘culture’ are mobilised in different ways both to create identities based on difference (evident in Part III) and those based on interaction (evident in Part IV).

Postcolonial city identity is thus contradictory, ironic, anxious about claims of authenticity and, paradoxically, constituted by a simultaneous rejection and fairly unproblematic identification with the culture of colonialism. The integration and interweaving of the past and the present in the fabric of the city often results in the re-imagining of postcolonial tradition. As such, space and architecture “can thus be interrogated for its embodiment of colonial constructions and categories in order to reveal the postcolonial condition” (Yeoh, 2001:459). Postcolonial architectural discourse is useful as a form of intervention and/ or critique which works towards engaging with “the monumental binary constructions of East/ West, traditional/ modern, natural/ cultural, structural/ ornamental” (Nalbantoglu & Wong, cited in Yeoh, 2001:459). This engagement facilitates “productive tensions arising from incommensurate differences rather than deceptive reconciliations” (Nalbantoglu & Wong, cited in Yeoh, 2001:459). The use of architecture spatially negotiates culture, gender and ethnic boundaries, disrupting traditional groupings and refashioning and imagining difference and identity. Often, as mentioned previously, the use of city space negotiates histories and identities which are not factually correct. As Prakash (cited in Yeoh, 2001:459) observes, postcolonial identity politics may work at “recovering what we never had”. Part III illustrates a colonial reworking of an identity politics in Durban based on traditional ruralised forms which – certainly in Durban’s early days – represent a fictionalised account of a space where instead a much more ‘urban’ politics of integration actually existed.

How then can one describe the postcolonial city more specifically? It is a space of relational identity, a product of interactions between the pre-modern, modern and traditional – the product of the coloniser and the colonised (Kumar, 2002). The postcolonial city is thus traditionally defined as a space of interaction and encounters

with difference. Hence, the city is “the visual space of the political” (Yeoh, 2001:461). It is “often in the buzz of the streets and the thick of urban encounters between individuals and groups that the postcolonial is enacted and lived, often in contestatory terms” (Yeoh, 2001:459). As a result, the African city especially has become the “visual symbol of post-colonialism, both meeting place and battleground for two opposed worlds, with their contrasting features: power and impotence, poverty and ease, new immigrants and old inhabitants, center and fringe” (Triulzi, 1996:81). Moreover, through this lens, new ways of conceptualising “urban life may be emerging...[that] values multiplicity, variation, improvisation, and opportunism and distrusts fixed, unitary modes of practice and linear sequences of phases” (Ferguson, 1999:251).

Isolating the postcolonial city, as an object of analysis, has been a difficult task. Some, particularly in the Asian context, take the view that unique postcolonial urban spaces are forming as extended metropolitan regions or ‘desakota’. The ‘desakota’ is, according to Kelly (cited in Yeoh, 2001:462), “a new and enduring urban form...which is neither rural nor urban but incorporates distinctive elements of both”. Durban (with its newly expanded municipal boundaries) certainly bears similarity to such a definition. On the other hand, others contend that the postcolonial city is transitory and will soon be subsumed by globalising trends. Globalisation will, accordingly, homogenise all cities despite their different histories. However, Yeoh (2001:464) concludes “what the ‘postcolonial city’ really means must be teased out on the basis of specific historical and social circumstances for each is a product of a different postcolonial moment”. Yeoh (2001:464) challenges geographers to closely link postcolonial urban geography to the “larger enterprise of constructing and elaborating alternative postcolonial geographical traditions, for without these new lenses how can we hope to grasp the swirl of sensibilities and groundswell of politics emerging in the postcolonial urban world?” Few geographers have thus far taken up the challenge in the urban context. Few have confronted “the fraught terrain of representation and allow[ed] multiple claims to discursive authority in the difficult task of making room for the subaltern to speak, without either romanticizing or flattening out his or her voice” (Yeoh, 2001:464). Moreover, scholars of the postcolonial world are encouraged to break away from theories prescribed by European and American scholars who “have thought out on our behalf not only the script of colonial enlightenment and exploitation, but also our anti-colonial resistance and postcolonial misery” (Chatterjee, cited in Yeoh, 2001). Thus, Yeoh (2001:464) concludes that for “a postcolonial urban geography to aspire to significant

breaks with the prescribed script, the first step would be for the once-colonized to claim 'the freedom of imagination' in a contested field of power to imagine our cities differently".

Jacobs (1996) is one scholar who does just that; importantly, she links the literature of the postcolonial city with cultural processes. Jacobs (1996:1) attempts to "forge a productive encounter between the space of the contemporary city and recent theorisations of colonialism and postcolonialism". This she achieves by closely documenting the cultural politics of place and identity in urban localities in Australia and Britain. Jacobs (1996:1) observes that negotiations and expressions of imperialism occur not just *in* space but also through a "politics of identity and power that articulates itself *through* space and is, fundamentally, *about* space". In the case of a transforming postcolonial society like South Africa her ideas are especially germane. Jacobs (1996:2) argues that:

the politics produced by places in the process of becoming or being made anew is...also a politics of identity...This politics of identity and place is not simply built around structures of power internal to the city itself or even to globally linked processes of urbanisation. It is undeniably a politics that occurs in and is concerned with the city, but for many groups it is also a politics constituted by a broader history and geography of colonial inheritances, imperialist presents and postcolonial possibilities.

Moreover, Jacobs (1996) observes that while imperialism is undeniably linked with political and economic events, it additionally operates through a range of cultural processes. In this way constructions of both the 'Self' and 'Other' provided the foundation from which empires were built and unequal and inequitable relations formed among their citizenry. During colonialism, the colonised 'Other' was negatively constructed in order to reinforce structures of coloniser domination. According to Jacobs (1996:2):

The processes by which notions of Self and Other are defined, articulated and negotiated are a crucial part of what might be thought of as the cultural dimension of colonialism and postcolonialism...these processes mark out the very categories of difference which have come to be the positively or negatively ascribed 'cultures', 'races', 'ethnicities', or 'genders' of imperial structures of power. But also, the very making and remaking of identity occurs through

representational and discursive spheres, both official and popular, material and ideological.

Importantly, Thomas (cited in Jacobs, 1996:2) notes that colonialism has always been "imagined and energised through signs metaphors and narratives". For example, Segal (cited in Yeoh, 2001) points out that representations of stereotypes from the colonial past still persist in postcolonial Trinidad. Europeans (masters), Africans (slaves) and East Indians (indentured labourers) are stereotypically imagined and portrayed in terms of an 'imagined plurality' instead of an 'imagined community' (Yeoh, 2001). This imagined pluralism is drawn on "in positive ways to position the postcolonial nation as a 'cosmopolitan society' (read: harmonious, tolerant, diverse but not divided) in the elaboration of nationalist ideology" (Yeoh, 2001:460). Thus, persistent colonial traditions of representation are often reworked and reinvigorated in the postcolonial context as is evident in the discussion of the colonial tropes enacted in Durban which are discussed in forthcoming chapters.

Colonial traditions are also often resisted (Nash, 2002). In an imaginative and provoking piece, Cook et al. (2000) examine how an art exhibit, centred on bananas from St. Lucia and their connections to Britain, destabilises colonial representations. A sense of "connective aesthetics" (Cook et al., 2000:341) is sculptured by visitors' interaction with the exhibit. In effect, the exhibit promotes the possibility of innovative and interactive fashioning of more connective social possibilities. Likewise, in Durban, colonial representations are largely resisted in the artistic field as Part IV illustrates.

Difference is clearly important in the construction of urban space and life. Critical work examining the role of difference in urban environments "has offered a cultural politics of the city that has unsettled previous urban analyses" (Lees, 2002:106). A cultural politics of the city includes attention to urban cultural heritage. How heritage landscapes are constituted in the urban context supplies one with common, material forms from which to examine the "relationships between the memorialization of the past and the spatialization of public memory" (Johnson, cited in Yeoh, 2001:461) in the nation building context of postcolonial societies. Every postcolonial city is structured by differing dynamics which work to define memory and heritage. Scholars have paid attention to a number of different mechanisms in this regard ranging from state and institutional mechanisms to the "contested 'heritagizing' of specific elements of the urban fabric inherited from the colonial past" (Yeoh, 2001:461). In this regard, what constitutes heritage, meaning, and what has value, is highly contested in the postcolonial context.

Urban cultural heritage is often framed within the tropes of the pre-modern, rural, mono-cultural and the static as shall be seen in Part III. This results in the general perception that what is being preserved is historically authentic, harmonic, pastoral and beautiful. In this manner, heritage projects traditionally ignore the urban, dynamic, multi-cultural and postmodern (Soyez, 2002). The consequence of this is the romanticisation and sanitisation of urban identity which effectively homogenises people and place.

However, urban identities in postcolonial contexts are highly fluid, contested and open to different interpretations. Clearly, the close relationship between the urban and identity (culture) takes the form of an iterative, generative process but it also frames an understanding of how the city materially scripts its competing identities just as those same identities write their cultural history and contemporary realities back into the city. The concept of urban identities, which has emerged from the literature on the postcolonial city, is fleshed out below in order to appreciate in fuller depth its co-constituting nature with urbanity. A discussion regarding urban identities is particularly important for the overall narrative as the present thesis is concerned with city scale identity as opposed to individual or group identity.

Urban Identities

"a great city, whose image dwells in the memory of man, is the type of some great idea. Rome represents Conquest; Faith hovers over the towers of Jerusalem; and Athens embodies the pre-eminent quality of the antique world, Art" (Benjamin Disraeli, cited in Finucan, 2002:11).

Having appreciated postcolonial cities more generally, it is apposite to reflect more specifically on the relationship between the urban and identity, with specific reference to their co-constituting nature. Central to the coming to terms with postcolonial identity are notions of subjectivity and, to a large extent, urban citizenship (Ahluwalia, 2001). Oktay (2002:263) argues, "the urban experience is, and has always been, the collective experience of places and spaces". Consequently, "the quality of urban public spaces...has a significant role in making the identity of a city" (Oktay, 2002:264).

Purists would argue that the term 'urban identities' is an oxymoron. After all, a city is an inanimate object. Nevertheless, urban environments are flavoured with their own identities. As Tomlinson et al. (2003b:xi) suggest: "Just as a nation requires those who live within its boundaries to imagine themselves as citizens, a successful city

requires that its residents also identify with it and feel a moral attachment to its fortunes". Indeed, Oktay (2002) proposes that urban identity is an essential goal necessary for the future and sustainability of a good environment. Like individuals, cities should have identities, distinctions and characters comprised of a myriad elements and characteristics (Oktay, 2002). In essence, the idea of city identity is not strikingly new. Jane Jacobs (1961), in her seminal piece on the life and death of American cities, personifies the city and thus ascribes it various identities. For example, she professes that "cities have marvellous innate abilities for understanding, communicating, contriving and inventing what is required to combat their difficulties" (Jacobs, 1961:447). In another older example of literature on cities and their social life, Wirth (1964) distinguishes between cities relying on differing economic bases (e.g. industry, fishing, mining, tertiary education, and tourism). These cities have different material foundations and thus have differing sets of attendant characteristics. He determines that, on the basis of density of settlement, number and degree of heterogeneity, it is possible to account for differences between cities (Wirth, 1964). In the present globalising milieu, cities are involved in increasingly complex spatial relationships. For this reason, some cities designate themselves First-World cities in contrast to Third World cities. Such identity categorisations have a large impact on ways of accessing the resources which shape the city's material fabric. Contemporary studies of urban identities explore how a particular city comes to be known the way that it is and how it is produced as a subject. In this light, identity shapes the urban form in tandem with the urban form shaping its identity. This thesis seeks to explore this co-constituting nature.

The city is a "discursive and a material site of struggle and performance" (McNeill, 1999:3). In each city, these struggles are different and thus every city has a defined character in addition to similar features to other urban spaces. Additionally, discourses are often inscribed upon the city to give it a particular identity. For example, in Cairo, the political discourse of *infitah* – which is essentially about "opening up to the outside" (Öncü and Weyland, 1997:12) and is used to construct and promote a 'modern national identity' in Egypt – has been inscribed on the city of Cairo. Thus, the idea of a 'modern national identity' is bound up with a vision of a 'modern Cairo' which is fit to be gazed upon by both foreign tourists and upper class Egyptians (Öncü and Weyland, 1997). Identity has spatial outcomes just as the reverse is true. Indeed, identity and culture directly influence and shape urban changes and vice versa (Landry, 2000).

Thus, cities are often economically and emotionally invested in particular images of themselves in order that they attract investment or attention. In this regard, many advantages stem from discovering, reinforcing and marketing a city's unique identity or image (Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002; Oktay, 2002). It is important for some cities that they market themselves as a global city or a tourist mecca. More specifically, it is clearly apparent that cities do in fact have unique but well-known identities. Rome is the Eternal City. Glasgow, the City of Culture. London is the City of Finance and Paris, the City of Romance (or "Paris, City of...pooh!" as an article commenting on a crackdown on Parisian dog owners would have it [*The Mercury*, 2002c:1]). Johannesburg is commonly known as Egoli, City of Gold. These identities are formulated and animated within differing local contexts which are comprised of elements of the natural and human environment. This local context is, importantly, not static but is historically determined and constantly changing and reinventing itself. There are elements of personification and reification in this parlance; however, this is hardly a new phenomenon. The Egyptian hieroglyph for the word 'city' was the same as that used for the word 'mother'. In this manner, city identity was experienced as warm, close and embracing (Oktay, 2002). These identities are more than benign classifications and have huge implications for the way in which cities attract investors. Many groups in Durban are well aware of this fact and such ramifications have bearing on the varying constructions of its identity as will be illustrated in the following chapters.

The cultural elements of globalisation also have a significant impact on urban identities. Amsterdam's historically grown urban identity has been somewhat superseded by its recent urban identity of social permissiveness and latitude (Nijman, 1999). It is important to note that globalisation does not necessarily homogenise all places. Nijman (1999:150) observes that some "aspects of the 'personality' of a place may be reinforced in the process of globalization, while others may become underrepresented". Thus, the city is an important site for the study of cultural globalisation because global cultural exchanges are located there. In addition, a city's image "may constitute an item of cultural consumption in this global exchange" (Nijman, 1999:150). A city's identity is thus rendered an important commodity. Nijman (1999:150) argues that urban identities are thus increasingly superficial and "determined in the realm of globally transmitted sound-and-vision-bites, and this is often reflected in the local culture itself". Mass tourism and globalisation result "in an increasingly shallow understanding of local cultures and identities. In the process, the localities themselves

turn into caricatures of mutant reflections of their past...The inevitable result...is the vulgarization of the world's cultural geography" (Nijman, 1999:162). Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate how those responsible for tourism in Durban have contributed to a shallow perception of the city's past. Indeed, Part III suggests that the reinvention of colonial frameworks have created a mutant version of Durban's identity based on mythical versions of its past.

Zukin et al. (cited in Lees, 2002:105) also reminds that city images should not only be regarded "as the manipulated products of growth elites, or as simulacra, but also as implicit texts about terrains of inequality". Moreover, in some cases, city identity can be overpowering and restrictive. So concerned with marketing themselves in a particular vein, cities sometimes tend to exclude less dominant (or less motivated or organised) elements. Said (cited in Lee & Lam, 1998:967) comments in this regard, "I think that identity is a product of will...What prevents us, in this voluntary identity, from encompassing several identities...Why not open our spirits to others?". In this regard, Lee and Lam (1998:969) encourage the formation of "new and composite identities based on new material realities that give rise to new imaginaries". Part IV offers an introduction to the new identities emerging in Durban which are simultaneously based in, and constitute, new urban realities giving rise to new imaginaries of the city. Such an approach views the urban and identity as growing simultaneously. Part IV also speaks to different strategies of combating problems, such as those experienced in Hong Kong and in Durban, where the mass media portray urban cultural identity monovocally in such a way that local citizens are unable to reconcile their own multiple identities with the official representations of their culture (Lee & Lam, 1998).

At this juncture, having appreciated the close connection between urbanity and identity, it is necessary to draw out more specifically what the discussion on postcolonial cities and urban identities implies for the planning of cities. Indeed, the discussion thus far has pointed out the urban cultural politics implicit in notions of the postcolonial city. This chapter has also illustrated the co-constituting relationship between urbanity and identity. How then do these discussions have practical resonance in the city? The interplay and ramifications of difference and unity implicit in identity politics invites further investigation into a subset of the postcolonial theme; namely, multiculturalism, in order to tease out the implications of cultural diversity for cities. Multicultural discourse offers fertile ground for scholars of the South African city – it offers pragmatic suggestions for planning for, and encompassing multicultural diversity.

Multipli(city): The Carnival of the Multicultural City

"I look into my crystal globe, and I dream of the carnival of the multicultural city: I don't want a city where everything stays the same and everyone is afraid of change;...where immigrants are called 'blackheads' and forced to find shelter in the industrial zone; where whites pay more and more of their private incomes to protect themselves from 'strangers'...I don't want a city where the advertising men are in charge...I dream of city...where social justice is...prized...I want a city where the community values and rewards those who are different; where a community becomes more developed as it becomes more diverse; where 'community' is caring and sharing responsibility for the physical and spiritual condition of the living space...I want a city...where citizens wrest from space new possibilities, and immerse themselves in their cultures while respecting those of their neighbours, collectively forging new hybrid cultures and spaces. I want a city...where planners 'plan' by negotiating fears and desires, mediating memories and hopes, facilitating change and transformation" (Sandercock, 2000:201-202).

The discussion of postcolonial cities and urban identities thus far has conceptually invoked the notion of the plurality of identity politics involved in the negotiation of diverse, urban spaces. It has also laid the foundations for thinking about the mutually constituting nature of urbanity and identity. It is necessary to apply these ideas more practically in the space of the city. Multiculturalism is a useful concept in this regard. Postcolonialism is a parent literature framing the discussion on multiculturalism. Indeed, Hall (2000:213) observes that there "is a close relationship between the re-emergence of 'the multi-cultural question' and the phenomenon of the 'post-colonial'". Postcolonialism "points to the possibility of re-imagining the nation by creating a crisis of citizenship which arose out of both minimalist and exclusionary practices" (Ahluwalia, 2001:72). In this milieu and particularly in cities which have experienced division, segregation and separation as part of their colonial heritage, there has been an easy and comfortable – but not unproblematic – appropriation of multiculturalism as a panacea for social integration. However, there is a fundamentally different interpretation of multiculturalism under postcolonialism. In previously colonised societies, planning for, and encompassing multiculturalism is important in negotiating contested urban spaces.

In South Africa, these debates are crucial because South Africa is an exemplary case of a postcolonial, multicultural society (Thornton, 2000).

Simply defined, multiculturalism is “the endorsement of cultural diversity” (de Oliver, 2001:228). It is popularly conceptualised as the existence of mutually beneficial co-operation between distinct cultural groups. There are a number of different forms and discourses of multiculturalism, ranging from the conservative to the liberal. McLaren (1994) identifies a tentative theoretical grid of four positions in this regard: conservative/ corporate multiculturalism, liberal multiculturalism, left-liberal multiculturalism, and critical and resistance multiculturalism.

Conservative multicultural attitudes are rooted in colonial and racial ideology. These multiculturalists do little more than pay lip service to the idea of the equality of all races. Mainly assimilationist in aim, this form of multiculturalism aims to construct a common culture based on English-speaking, Anglo, middle-class values. Diverse cultures are only valued within the safe framework of the dominant culture. Liberal multiculturalism argues that a natural equity exists between all races. From this point of view, equality is absent in places like the United States of America because of unequal access to educational and social opportunities which in turn limits participation in the capitalist marketplace. However, this position is ethnocentric in its outlook and oppressive in its support of universalistic humanism. Like the previous position, “the legitimating norms which govern the substance of citizenship are identified most strongly with Anglo-American cultural-political communities” (McLaren, 1994:51).

Left-liberal multiculturalism places emphasis on the importance of cultural differences. Left-liberalists argue that an exclusive focus on race ignores issues of class, sexuality and gender. However, the position tends to exoticise ‘otherness’ in that it naively retreats to the idea that difference resides “in a primeval past of cultural authenticity” (McLaren, 1994:51). Unfortunately, this view tends to essentialise cultural differences and “ignore the historical and cultural ‘situatedness’ of difference” (McLaren, 1994:52). In this regard, “there is a tendency to ignore difference as a social and historical construction that is constitutive of the power to represent meanings” (McLaren, 1994:52). This perspective assumes that there are authentic cultural experiences to be had. Difference is treated as an essence which is independent of culture, history and power (McLaren, 1994).

Many have become most critical of the above forms of multiculturalism as they contend that these strains have exoticising and/ or assimilationist tendencies (Dunn et

al., 2001). Radical, critical or resistance multiculturalism challenges some of these limitations (Dunn et al., 2001; McLaren, 1994). Critical and resistance multiculturalism is primarily concerned with the project of social transformation. McLaren (1994:53) observes that critical multiculturalism is developed "from the perspective of a resistance, post-structuralist approach to meaning, and emphasiz(es) the role that language and representation play in the construction of meaning and identity". From this perspective representations of gender, class and race "are understood as the result of larger social struggles over signs and meanings and in this way...stresses the central task of transforming the social, cultural, and institutional relations in which meanings are generated" (McLaren, 1994:53). Critical multiculturalism does not view culture as harmonious, nonconflictual or consensual. Diversity is not a goal but should be affirmed through commitment to social justice and cultural criticism. Difference is socially constructed by virtue of ideology, history, culture and power (McLaren, 1994). Other policy implications of radical multiculturalism "would include the recognition of a multifarious, local citizenry...through more inclusive official portrayals of collective identity" (Dunn et al., 2001:2479). In this manner, local citizenry can be effectively re-imagined in culturally diverse and multifaceted ways (Dunn et al., 2001).

Giroux (1994) furthers these arguments in his call for 'insurgent' multiculturalism. Arguing that multiculturalism, as a political discourse, is too important to be limited to the confines of conservative or liberal thinking, he suggests that what is necessary is critical and ethical reflection about the ramifications of dialogue between different cultures. It is also important to theorise culture in terms of its plurality in ways that are not superficial. Parekh (cited in Giroux, 1994:337) provides a useful definition in this regard:

Multiculturalism doesn't simply mean numerical plurality of different cultures, but rather a community which is creating, guaranteeing, encouraging spaces within which different communities are able to grow at their own pace. At the same time it means creating a public space in which these communities are able to interact, enrich the existing culture and create a new consensual culture in which they recognize reflections of their own identity.

Accordingly, Giroux (1994:337) picks up the argument, contending that multiculturalism thus:

becomes more than a critical referent for interrogating the racist representations and practices of the dominant culture, it also provides a space in which the

criticism of cultural practices is inextricably linked to the production of cultural spaces marked by the formations of new identities and pedagogical practices that offers a powerful challenge to the racist, patriarchal, and sexist principles embedded in...society.

In this sense, insurgent multiculturalism is most useful not only as a critical point of reference for investigating the dominant representational tactics of Durban's mainstream tourism marketing efforts (see Chapters 5 and 6) but also for creating the space in which such criticism is linked to the production of other cultural spaces within Durban which are characterised by new and challenging identities (see Chapters 7 and 8).

Thus, as the above discussion illustrates, multiculturalism is not a simple concept. Nor, in essence, is the transition to critical, resistance or insurgent multiculturalism a simple, uncomplicated trajectory. For this reason, geographers in particular have begun to critically examine how to facilitate a multicultural society. In this regard, Dodson (2000) explores how the distopias of apartheid can be dismantled and a new cultural geography emerge in South Africa. Additionally, urban geographers and urban planners have directly taken up the issue of how to plan for multicultural diversity with some interesting and unexpected results. This is a response or reaction to earlier social assimilationist strategies which attempted to homogenise diverse populations into mainstream Anglo culture (Watson, 2002). This is certainly Watson's (1996) concern in her piece on planning for multicultural diversity in Sydney, Australia. Similarly, Sandercock (2000) explores methods from which to plan for a multicultural city and society. Likewise, Watson (2002) calls for the recognition of difference within South African planning practice. These scholars' focus on the urban is particularly relevant. Their concern is clearly centred on how difference might be accommodated by the built environment. Watson (1996) examines the city of Sydney in this regard. She argues that most cities, even today, reflect a modernist planning imperative, a point Sandercock (2000) would agree with. Moreover, Watson (1996:208) contends that "multiculturalism within modernist discourse has been a homogenizing strategy which has defined and created limits within which acceptable difference is permitted".

The dichotomy of cultural difference is that it can be perceived as both exotic and threatening. Thus, spaces or built environments in which difference is seen as threatening are subject to a great deal more public resistance than spaces in which difference is seen as exotic. In this regard, Watson (1996) provides an example of a group of former Ethiopians who wished to convert premises in an outlying suburb of

South Africa has meant the obscuring of racialised inequality coupled with a euphoric celebration of diversity and cultural tolerance. Accordingly, "the new multiculturalist discourse draws on ahistorical and exoticized notions of authentic traditional African cultures that obscure both the hybridity and fluidity of African cultural identities, as well as the mundane social realities of racialized poverty" (Robins, 2000:416). Unfortunately, and too regularly, multiculturalism is reduced to a "process of recuperation whereby diverse cultures are returned homogenized as folkloric spectacle...In this formulation, multiculturalism functions to amalgamate and spuriously to unify nationalism and culture into a depoliticized multimedia event" (Gunew, cited in Watson, 1996:212). Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate the manner in which multiculturalism serves to homogenise and reinvent (particularly) black African culture in a depoliticised multimedia format.

Robins (2000) also argues that the reification of black African culture simply feeds a form of multiculturalism that is depoliticised and does not mark a significant departure from apartheid thinking. Accordingly, one should focus on the manner in which racialised poverty, social injustice and polarisation are reproduced within the frame of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is inserted into global capitalism in that "globalization tends to manufacture difference in the service of its own consuming passions for accumulation" (Robins, 2000:417). Millions of rands are allocated to tourist income generators, like the Victoria and Albert Waterfront in Cape Town or uShaka Marine World in Durban, at the expense of township tourism. The poverty and gang violence of the townships has considerably less tourist appeal. Tours of South African townships are nevertheless gaining in popularity. Robins (2000:417) argues that township poverty can be "repackaged into a narrative of African resilience, vitality, and creativity that...appeal[s] to international tourists eager to venture beyond the white spaces of the city". However, such tours often offer an essentialised portrait of Africa where key stops include a witch doctor's store and a shack where a few elderly men sit and converse (Witz, 2001). Tours into these areas certainly "straddle...the divide between tourist desires for unique and authentic African experiences and natural beauty, and the more mundane realities of township poverty" (Robins, 2000:417). Yet the manner in which these tours are packaged are problematic. While elements of political history are increasingly inserted into township tour narratives, to a large extent, the tours remain simplistic, the source of misinformation and the forum where 'the West' encounters Africa (Witz, 2001; Dirsuweit, 1999a).

In this context of commodified multiculturalism, Robins (2000:422) is left with a host of pertinent questions:

How do we deconstruct such essentializing versions of multiculturalism without bending the rod too far in the direction of denial of cultural difference? In other words, is there a 'third space' between cultural essentialism and crude forms of anti-essentialism that deny difference altogether? What should planning for a 'multiple public' look like in a 'multicultural' (post-) apartheid city? How can planning visions creatively accommodate different, alternative, and marginal identities and imaginations? In other words, how can planners begin to break open the homogenising straitjacket of modernist planning to allow for the expression of difference without succumbing to the temptation to exoticize cultural difference in ways that obscure the more mundane spatial legacies of apartheid?

Robins (2000) argues further that part of the answer to these questions lies in the need to centre racialised poverty and violence at the expense of exoticised depictions of the cultural landscape. Moreover, the social and spatial continuities of the apartheid city should be explored and foregrounded. Despondently, Robins (2000) queries how public spaces are to be transformed and the urban landscape desegregated whilst poverty and racialised segregation are being reproduced through the injection of capital into tourist sites and sites of middle class consumption. As a result, urban segregation in South Africa is largely relegated to the vagaries of the market. In the case of the city of Cape Town, despite limited township tours which display some measure of innovation, "mainstream media and tourist representations of the city are likely to continue to obscure the legacy of racialized inequality in the name of an imagined rainbow city and exotic African tourist destination" (Robins, 2000:423). Cape Town is most certainly "not simply a rainbow city of cultural diversity and exotic spice. It is also a space of social polarization, ghettoization, and fortified shopping malls and suburban homes – 'Fortress LA' at the tip of Africa?" (Robins, 2000:423). Similar points could be made about Durban.

Such an urban landscape is operationalised and legitimised through planning closely associated with entrepreneurial local government and positioning aligned with global competitiveness concerns. Watson (2002) traces how such planning discourses have become formalised in Cape Town. These discourses flowed from a planning trajectory which originated in apartheid-style segregatory planning and moved through more idealised planning approaches of redistribution and urban integration.

Watson's (2002) analysis of Cape Town certainly has wider relevance for other South African cities. She warns against the dangers of thinking simplistically about space and suggests the most useful way forward would involve accountability in recognising and planning for difference in the built environment. Even so, she cautions that such planning discourses should take heed of their potential to mark a continuance – or at least a remembrance – of apartheid's policy of separate development which suggested cultural difference justified the segregation of people into different spaces (Watson, 2002).

Racism, at times, certainly inhabits official multiculturalism discourses (Jackson & Jacobs, 1996). de Oliver (2001) takes the debate a step further in that he more explicitly relates the two apparently irreconcilable doctrines of multiculturalism and the doctrine of privilege based on race. Studying the example of San Antonio in Texas, United States of America, de Oliver (2001:229) reveals how "multiculturalism and racial hierarchy can be simultaneously integrated and operationalised as a coherent and single project". San Antonio is an excellent choice to elucidate multicultural practice as its economy is based on a tourism industry which privileges ethnicity. Despite the fact that San Antonio's promotional repertoire makes use of a number of different ethnic groups, Hispanic culture receives the greatest attention and is central to its marketing campaign. Cultural promotion, with Hispanic culture as its central theme, is responsible for much tourist income (de Oliver, 2001).

However, "the valuation of Latino cultural aesthetics is not reflected in the underlying spatial and economic demographics of the city" (de Oliver, 2001: 232). San Antonio's tourist economy is dependent on the promotion of the culture of a group that is marginalised both socially and economically. The idea of multiculturalism initially gained momentum in San Antonio because the city was marked by racial, cultural and ethnic disparities. Additionally, the Hispanic culture (the majority culture in the city) was seen to be valuable. de Oliver (2001:235) admits that "this valuation of multiculturalism was not inherently based explicitly on objective Hispanic aesthetics per se but was rather due to the therapeutic, anti-industrial qualities with which Hispanic aesthetics were associated". Mainstream white identity is seen to be associated with industrial progress and rationalism and is thus seen as the opposite of exotic. It is, instead, quite conventional. Hence, ironically, "Anglo identity has little market value with respect to countering the cultural malaise of industrial culture, since it is perceived as fundamentally associated with that culture" (de Oliver, 2001:254). de Oliver (2001) clearly shows how economic

benefits to be gained from the presentation of Hispanic culture were crucial in the town's formulation of multiculturalism.

The authorities in San Antonio decided to create an intimate village, infused with Hispanic character, "as a spiritual *antidote* to modernity that would serve as an economic base" (de Oliver, 2001:236). This set the cultural and economic framework necessary to operationalise multiculturalism. Crucially, "market-driven initiatives based on commodified Latino identity gave rise to a systemic conception of multiculturalism that could functionally integrate traditional expressions of racial hierarchy. *Multiculturalism was to be sold – not lived*" (de Oliver, 2001:236, emphasis added). In effect, the city was committed to exotic ethnicity and cultural authenticity in striking contrast to San Antonio's modern, industrial, urban character. As a result, "market-driven multiculturalism oriented to the material expression of cultural difference inevitably expresses the prevailing racial norms of both the marketer and the primary market" (de Oliver, 2001:238). This is illustrative of the manner in which multiculturalism can functionally co-exist "with traditional expressions of cultural power" (de Oliver, 2001:238).

The socio-economic realities of Hispanics in San Antonio are harsh and bear little similarity to the images portrayed in the promotional literature. As inner city areas were required, Hispanic people incompatible with the tourist landscape were removed. In effect, the inner city was sanitised for the tourist gaze. The result of this is the marketing of a culture in the absence of the actual people who bear that culture. Essentially, "it was an intimate urban environment of commodified multiculturalism for the individual tourist, created at the expense of a downtown, predominantly minority population" (de Oliver, 2001:249). Commodified multiculturalism does not require "the physical presence of cultural 'others' – just that of their commodified symbols" (de Oliver, 2001:244). Crucially important, de Oliver (2001:253) concludes that "for minorities, despite legal equality and high-profile participation in the marketplace of representations, contemporary multiculturalism results in continued *bodily* socio-economic marginalisation, but full citizenship in the democracy of commodities". In this case, "myth and imagery are woven into very grounded...social processes and outcomes" (Head, cited in Nash, 2002:223).

The San Antonio example has great resonance with the Durban experience where discourses have shaped a built environment of commodified multiculturalism in the form of uShaka Marine World. uShaka Marine World represents a sanitised urban space which is based on reinvented colonial tropes of indigenous

Africanity and packaged in the guise of commodified multiculturalism. This will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 6. For the present, it is important to note that socially constructed racial categories and identities have been increasingly exposed to criticism (see Anderson's [1987] paper on Vancouver's Chinatown for an examination of how institutional racial discourses can construct racial categories). This critique is perhaps most useful when linked to notions of citizenship in that it is helpful in appreciating how institutional discourses and multiculturalism can simultaneously shape urban space and the identities inhabiting and utilising that space.

Increasingly, multiculturalism, in its various guises, has been linked at the local, city scale to notions of citizenship. Dunn et al. (2001) attempt to comment on the theoretical and policy implications of multiculturalism in the context of Australian local government. Their paper identifies three pillars of multicultural policy which includes a focus on community relations, access to services and, most importantly for the purposes of this discussion, citizenship and symbolic representation. This last pillar is fashioned around the notion that diverse cultural practices and expressions should be facilitated and cultural and heritage sites protected. Moreover, "this category also encompasses the ability of citizens to participate in the processes of local governance, as well as changes to the official enunciations of local identity and citizenship" (Dunn et al., 2001:2478). Crucially, multiculturalist policy can also lay "the foundations for significant changes in the official construction of national identity" (Dunn et al., 2001:2482), an observation as relevant in South Africa as it is in Australia. Multiculturalist discourse additionally works to exclude certain people from citizenry. For example, the comment, cited in Dunn et al. (2001:2488), of a local government manager in rural New South Wales is pertinent:

The Aboriginal population (second highest in NSW) and their behavioural problems have created a negative image for [the city]. Council is endeavouring to promote the cultural heritage of the Aboriginal people and provide them with more meaningful lives.

The implication of this kind of discourse is that certain people are excluded from notions of citizenship. Moreover, the kind of 'ideal' postcolonial citizen is constructed by virtue of reinvented and mythical versions of past histories. This allows the 'other' to be constructed as external to democratic processes and normal citizenry.

This can also be evidenced in the majority of council brochures where ethnic diversity is not represented and the majority of photographs portray images of

Anglo-Celtic people and their places (Dunn et al., 2001). Clearly, in the opinion of local government, certain people are more representative of local citizenry than others. Multiculturally sensitive portrayals are not completely absent within the Australian context. Some local government brochures depict a wide variety of people engaging in the lived space of the city and convey a more inclusive notion of citizenship and belonging. Dunn et al. (2001) are quick to point out however that shifts to symbolic inclusivity are not necessarily indicative of lack of inter-communal tensions or expanded service provision. They do, however, provide a context within which calls for such multicultural initiatives are strengthened. Dunn et al. (2001) thus highlight the value of symbolic shifts. In addition to institutional reform, it is imperative that symbolic reform is likewise undertaken. Symbolic reform is crucial for affirming and democratically recognising cultural difference. Radical multiculturalism is more than a management strategy regulating cultural diversity. It is about the refiguring of local politics and the rethinking of "local citizenship as multifarious" (Dunn et al., 2001:2491). Through the expansion of citizenship, the meaning of the locality is re-written and re-imagined (Dunn et al., 2001). Similarly, Anderson (2000:387) contends that "there seems much to recommend the adoption of a broad concept of citizenship...to theorize struggles over rights to belong, define and fully participate in communities within the contradictory tensions of building national forms of identification". Anderson (2000) continues to argue that in cities, access to space is differential. In Australia, she argues that government gestures towards multiculturalism can be viewed in different lights. In this regard, "Government-doctored 'Chinatown' streetscapes might be seen as appropriate recognition of the contribution of Chinese people to multicultural Australia by some groups, and as minority type-casting in the eyes of some Chinese" (Anderson, 2000:387).

What is thus needed is a re-evaluation of public space and ideas of how to plan for diversity (Watson, 1996). Sandercock (2000:205), an Australian, contends that the history of urban "planning could be rewritten as the obsession with managing fear in the city". Solutions to this problem have included attempts at exclusion (e.g. segregation) and moral reformation (which Sandercock [2000] explains as the provision of parks, playgrounds and other facilities that are believed to be civilising – thus attempting to produce a particular kind of citizen). In opposition to this type of carceral planning, Sandercock (2000) suggests planning should allow for social transformation. A potentially transformative, therapeutic model is advocated in response. This model mixes

both “dialogue and negotiation across the gulf of cultural difference” (Sandercock, 2000:208). The importance of differing narratives is crucial here and practitioners should be conversant with a range of strategies which include listening, storytelling and interpretation of both body and visual languages. In this regard Sandercock (2000:209) proposes an “epistemology of multiplicity” whose central tenant proposes “a more democratic and culturally inclusive planning [which] not only draws on many different ways of knowing and acting, but also has to develop a sensibility able to discern which ways are most useful in what circumstances”. Sandercock (2000) believes that this approach is therapeutic and can lead to real, successful transformation and the capacity for collective growth. South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission is given by Sandercock (2000) as an example of the use of a therapeutic approach at the societal level. Therapy at different scales or levels is thought to have beneficial effects. In this way, one future for urbanists, planners and geographers is “as a negotiator of desires and fears” (Sandercock, 2000:209).

Like Sandercock (2000), Sophie Watson (1996), is also something of a utopian dreamer full of desires for the future of urban planning (see also Friedmann, 2000). She stresses the importance of cities as sites of fantasies and dreams which play important roles in the construction of our own identities. As a result, places, spaces and buildings need to be fashioned in ways “which feed the imagination and where different, alternative or marginal identities can flourish” (Watson, 1996:214). Sophie Watson (1996:213) suggests that in a multicultural, postcolonial milieu, planning for a “multiple public” may ensure less homogenising formations of multiculturalism. Planning should be flexible and open to different possibilities. Like Sandercock (2000), Sophie Watson (1996) believes that planning itself should concern itself more with fantasies and dreams. However, Vanessa Watson (2002), a South African, is more circumspect (regarding the power of planning to transform space and thereby improve lives) as a result of her exposure to shifts in Cape Town’s planning discourses. Nevertheless, she maintains the importance of planning’s transformative potential. Perhaps the difference in context leads to different appraisals. In South Africa, the legacy of apartheid means that planning issues are more intense and, given the poverty of many South Africans, have perhaps more consequence than in previously colonised settings in the ‘First World’.

Nonetheless, issues of multiculturalism are critical because in Australia, as in South Africa, planning practices and discourses have, in the past, been largely centred around homogenising factors (Watson, 2002; Robins, 2000; Watson, 1996). The

current situation in South Africa is precariously balanced between the poles of difference and unity – encompassed by homogenising nation building exercises (Brown, 2001).³ In this context, contemporary multicultural discourses have also tended to be homogenising. It would appear that critical/ insurgent multicultural discourses have had little impact on South African planning. Instead, South African planning discourses, which pay heed to 'rainbow nation' rhetoric, "continue to homogenize a highly differentiated population produced through centuries of racialised privilege and oppression" (Robins, 2000:410).

The metaphor of the rainbow nation, with its ubiquitous pot of gold, is perhaps the most obvious sign of the kind of multiculturalist discourse dominating post-apartheid South Africa. Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, gave birth to this idea and still promotes its relevance (Tutu, 2002). However, the rainbow nation metaphor "captures the way in which cultures have been juxtaposed rather than integrated" (Dodson, 2000:147) and subsumed into a melting pot of multicultural harmony. The idea of the melting pot is often seen to be radical and an element of postmodern and postcolonial sensibilities. However, the rhetoric is evident in earlier modernist discourses. Indeed, Wirth (1964:69) observes that the city has historically been viewed as a "melting-pot of races, peoples, and cultures, and a most favorable breeding-ground of new biological and cultural hybrids".

The rainbow nation metaphor deserves further interrogation in terms of the weight that it holds in contemporary South Africa as an eidolon of multiculturalism. Ramutsindela (2001:78) notes "that the imagined rainbow nation is also a search for accommodation of diversity in a common South Africanism – the celebration of unity in diversity". South Africa is a striking place "for its imbrication of multiple identities" (Nuttall & Michael, 2000:1). Complex configurations of identity have always been present in South Africa; however, according to Nuttall and Michael (2000:1), "the new nation has tried to mask these complex configurations by foregrounding an over-simplified discourse of rainbow nationalism" or rainbow nation building. Erasmus (2001a:20) suggests that this "multi-cultural reading is blind to power relations inherent in cultural formation and representation". In this vein, "rainbow nationalist discourse does not

³ Note that difference in South Africa is not restricted to describing relations between previously classified racial categories. There are internal dynamics of isolationism versus multiculturalism. For example, cosmopolitan Africanity is celebrated in the vein of 'African Renaissance' discourses while xenophobia is rampant. Indeed, many black South Africans are convinced that they are losing jobs and power to continental Africans (Freund, 2001).

provide a vocabulary with which to negotiate and process the racial terrain of South African culture and politics in the interests of transformation" (Erasmus, 2001a:20). By simply insisting "that we should be blind to 'race', it makes it more difficult to name and recognize the importance of articulating and working through antagonisms and conflict" (Erasmus, 2001a:20). Nuttall and Michael (2000:6) argue that "the rainbow nation has in fact been about polite proximities, about containment". Brown (2001:765) is more hostile in his rejection of South Africa's rainbow discourse. He argues that:

In the South African context, the political weight given to difference, the atrocities committed in its name, and the very powerful and evident effects of the racialisation of culture make multicultural metaphors, including those of the 'rainbow nation', seem facile in the extreme.

Ballard (2002a:9) is similarly critical: "The analogy of the 'Rainbow Nation', a cheerful image intended to convey the nation's transcendence of its history of racial division, became a symbol of failure rather than achievement". The rainbow discourse is fashioned around the notion of nation building but such strategies to concoct national identities is problematic especially at a time when global capitalism is subverting the distinctiveness of different nations (Anderson, 2000). As a result, it is suggested that new forms of cultural imagining are required.

Nuttall and Michael (2000) suggest that multiculturalist discourses need to be recast and that creolisation is perhaps a more apt path to follow. They feel that creolisation exceeds the limitations of multiculturalism. Creolisation is both a sociological notion and a linguistic concept (Medea, 2002). Creolisation has traditionally been understood to be the ongoing mixing of people of differing religions, cultures and languages so that a new language and culture is formed. In this way, social structures are reorganised. The discourse of rainbow nationalism sits in contrast to the concept of creolisation. Accordingly, "given anxieties about a politics of inclusivity, a concept like creolisation, which disturbs or destabilizes notions of fixed identities, would seem at odds with the project of nation-building" (Nuttall & Michael, 2000:6). Creolisation also differs from Bhabha's (1994) notion of the articulation and inscription of a Third Space of cultural hybridity. Implicit in Bhabha's (1994) Third Space is an identity politics of transformation and resistance; however, creolisation suggests that the formation of identities is more variable and do not necessarily encompass resistance. In other postcolonial discussions, hybridity is merely referred to as the result of the joining of two different entities, whereas creolisation is seen as a continuous process and a feature of

cross-cultural confrontation. Hence, creolisation is not just a descriptive term of “the composite nature of a people” (Dash, as cited in Nuttall & Michael, 2000:7).

Nuttall and Michael (2000) turn their attention to creolised South African spaces. Rather than viewing the South African city in terms of segregation and difference, they see city space as a prime site of creolisation. This is a “creolization that exceeds the apartheid geography even at its most extreme” (Nuttall & Michael, 2000:21). In other words, even during apartheid, the South African city played host to creolising practices which transcended apartheid’s artificially constructed boundaries and borders. Crucially, Nuttall and Michael (2000:22) contend that approaching the city as a site of creolisation

begins to open the possibilities of reading cities such as Durban and Johannesburg, with their involuted arcades and surprising recesses, in terms of creolized practices and imaginations. These cities, which have always been regional metropoli, become vivid examples...of open spaces.

Nuttall and Michael (2000) are thus striving towards the creation and understanding of urban spaces where the ‘exotic’ is both inadequate and pathetic in terms of definition. Moreover, the opposite – ‘ordinary’ urban space – is by no means passive or nondescript. Indeed, the “merging of time in memory turns the space of the city into a rich space of the possible, yielding surprising things” (Nuttall & Michael, 2000:22).

Such thinking is picked up in Part III which stresses that Durban has always been a site of creolisation. Likewise, Part IV illustrates how reading Durban in terms of its creolising cultural practices turns city space into a space of possibility. In this productive space, identity shapes urbanity and vice versa. The reification of black African culture, discussed in Part III, is challenged daily in the lived spaces of South African cities as cultural practices in South African cities are contested and constantly changing.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to grapple with the conceptual and pragmatic tools useful for approaching diverse, postcolonial cities such as Durban. The argument, moving through postcolonialism, urban identities, multiculturalism and creolisation has stressed the close relationship between identity, culture and the urban. Postcolonialism offers broad theoretical concepts enabling such understandings, while multicultural debates offer, at the urban level, ideas detailing how such conceptual discourses can be pragmatically affected in the built environment.

The urban has been framed as a critical site where contests over space are characteristic of postcolonialism; the city embodies these tensions and conflicts. Collective, urban identity, in this context, is thus multifaceted and open to a variety of interpretations. It is 'the urban' that draws the themes of postcolonialism, multiculturalism and creolisation together to illuminate the nature of identity and urban space. Thus, this chapter has combined a number of elements in its reading of the co-constituting nature of the postcolonial diver(C)ity. It does so in preparation for the following detailed narrative of Durban's urbanity and the politics of identity that is articulated through its cityscape. The discussion additionally provides a vital point of reference from which to examine attempts at presenting Durban as a multicultural, African city. Such insights are useful in comprehending both how reinvented tradition is invoked in the built environment in Part III and how artistic endeavours are enabling a new space of creolisation in Part IV. Before reading these two narratives of Durban and its identity, it is necessary to concentrate, in the next chapter, on the theory associated with African identity and urbanity in order to focus the theoretical debates of the postcolonial diver(C)ity more specifically on African urban space.

3

Africanity: Identity and Urbanity

Introduction

Durban is a city located on the south eastern margin of the African continent. Yet far from being a marginal continental player, Durban, in the post-apartheid milieu, has increasingly positioned itself at the vanguard of a new African urban consciousness. In terms of population, culture, economics and tourism, Durban is posturing as the quintessential African city. As a result, current debates around African identity and urbanity add texture to understandings of Durban. Having appreciated identity, culture and urbanity in a general postcolonial fashion, it is apposite to directly hone in on concepts which have relevance to a particular postcolonial space: the African continent. This chapter thus builds on the theoretical underpinnings outlined in the preceding chapter in an exploration of the multifaceted and intricate nature of Africanity and its relationship with the city. The chapter considers how African urbanity has been represented. It appears that the notion of African urbanity is plagued by certain inadequacies, and it is suggested that this be overcome by an imaginative de-linking of identity from stereotypical representations of Africa in order to create a more nuanced, postcolonial, urban geography. This analysis furnishes the fulcrum for interrogating divergent representations of Durban's identity in the following chapters. It appears that delving into Africanity and African cities affords precisely the fillip required to read different stories about Durban and its identity.

Africanity

"It is, of course true that the African identity is still in the making. There isn't a final identity that is African. But, at the same time, there is an identity coming into existence. And it has a certain context and a certain meaning" (Chinua Achebe, interviewed by Appiah, 1992).

"To be sure, there is no African identity that could be designated by a single term or that could be named by a single word, or subsumed under a single category. African identity does not exist as a substance. It is constituted, in varying forms, through a series of practices" (Mbembe, 2002:272).

Closely interwoven with postcolonialism, there is another concept which influences the way in which African cities attempt to define their identity and present themselves to the world. This notion centres on what Mbembe (2002) terms 'Africanity' and is intrinsically concerned with the constituents of African identity and its meaning. There is no simple definition of Africanity (Mbembe, 2002). No simple notion of a pan-ethnic African clustering is available. Moreover, the idea "that there is something unitary called African culture that could thus be summarized has been subjected to devastating critique by a generation of African intellectuals" (Appiah, 1997:731). African identities are often thought about in fairly simplistic terms. Nevertheless, recent studies have sought to problematise and complicate understandings of identity in Africa. A plethora of literature has emerged in this regard which has stimulated widespread debate.

It is important to note at the outset that the identity processes at work in Africa are scarcely unique to that continent. Indeed, the fashioning of a common European identity has invoked similar sets of debates. Regional integration, at the behest of the European Union, involving aspects such as a common currency, does not necessarily result in a common European identity. Multiple identities, cultures, languages and politics exist in the European context and, like in Africa, xenophobia is rampant. Thus, as in Africa, "the processes of defining Europe, specifying its boundaries and of becoming European are complex, contested and contradictory" (Hudson, 2000:422). The suggestion for the Europe Union, a suggestion that the newly formed African Union should closely heed, is to

promote socio-economic diversity and an imagination of Europe that celebrates and supports polyvocal societies and multiple participation within a Europe of complex geographies of identities, a Europe of people with shifting, hybrid and multiple identities which will include a progressive European dimension (Hudson, 2000:423).

Turning more specifically to the African situation, Appiah (1992) suggests that one must examine precolonial cultures in order to understand contemporary African culture. No continental inspired imaginings of identity were present as late as the nineteenth century in Africa. To generalise about African identity then "would have been 'to give to aery nothing a local habitation and a name'" (Appiah, 1992:174). Today, Appiah (1992) agrees that an African identity is emerging but he believes that it marks a new moment in African history.

whether they are indigenous to Africa or are of ancestries that are aboriginal in other continents and came to Africa through diverse human migrations...This definition of an African has nothing to do with race and colour...not all African people are black.

Furthermore, Mda (2002) contends that there are no rigid norms or creeds which determine Africanness. He believes that there are many cultures in Africa. While these cultures share similar features and themes, they are, in fact, distinctive. As a result, he calls for a sense of Africanness that transforms and thrives through the "free association of individuals" (Mda, 2002:9).

Mbembe (2002:263) asks rhetorically, "So, where are we today? What ways of imagining identity are at work and what social practices do they produce?". Mbembe (2002:264) contends that the apartheid situation in South Africa "has long led people, both in the West and Africa, to think that the polar opposition between blacks and whites summed up by itself the whole racial question in Africa". However, the black/white dichotomy is not the only racial cleavage present in Africa. Witness Hutus versus Tutsis and "a range of others that can attest to the panoply of colors and their annexation to projects of domination" (Mbembe, 2002:264). Moreover, whiteness as a category is changing in meaning from its colonial or apartheid days. Mbembe (2002:264, emphasis added) contends that:

the experience of Africans of European origin has taken on ever more diverse aspects throughout the continent. The forms in which this experience is imagined – not only by whites themselves, but also by others – are no longer the same. This diversity now makes the identity of Africans of European origin a *contingent and situated identity*.

Conceptual categories about race and identity are thus changing throughout the continent.

It is important to caution that while African identities are usable, they are not exclusive (Brown, 2001). An African identity may be just one identity that a person bears. In this way, a single person may host a number of differing identities (Appiah, 1992). Identities are clearly "complex and multiple and grow out of a history of changing responses to economic, political, and cultural forces, almost always in opposition to other identities" (Appiah, 1992:178). This multiplicity of identity is a key feature of the postcolonial African world. 'African' thus "incorporates a multiplicity of identities, cultural similarities, and differences – language, diversity, and so on. It refuses to be defined by

geographic, national, historical, cultural, and linguistic boundaries" (Kadali, interviewed by Nuttall & Michael, 2000:108).

As a result of this multiplicity, Mbembe (2002:271) argues that attempts to define African identity in neat and tidy ways will continue to fail, as they have in the past "as long as criticisms of African imaginations of the self and the world remain trapped within a conception of identity as geography – in other words, of time as space". Africans are constantly negotiating new positions in place, space and culture which have destabilised notions of difference and identity (Mbembe, 2002; Nuttall & Michael, 2000). In this regard, as his quote at the beginning of the section outlines, Mbembe (2002) believes that African identity is highly variable. He believes that forms of African identity are reversible, mobile and unstable and "cannot be reduced to a purely biological order based on blood, race, or geography. Nor can they be reduced to custom" (Mbembe, 2002:272). Thus he purports that only "the disparate, and often intersecting, practices through which Africans stylize their conduct and life can account for the thickness of which the African present is made" (Mbembe, 2002:272-273).

Debates about Africanity are very important for the purposes of this thesis. As will be discussed, Durban, in various guises, makes application to varying notions of Africanity in order to position itself as a particularly African city. While some of this positioning draws on textured, progressive versions of Africanity, other positions are more regressive, relying on outdated, colonial stereotypes of identity linked to race and geography. Before elucidating this argument, it is necessary to examine more closely the shades which living in South Africa ascribes to discourses of Africanness.

South African Identities

"The crocodile does not die under the water so that we can call the monkey to celebrate its funeral" (Appiah, 1992:180).

Appiah (1992) argues that the Akan proverb above illustrates that every person belongs to a community with its own customs. Thus,

To accept that Africa can be...a usable identity is not to forget that all of us belong to multifarious communities with their local customs; it is not to dream of a single African state and to forget the complexly different trajectories of the continent's so many languages and cultures (Appiah, 1992:180).

It is thus appropriate to extend this debate on Africanity and follow the trajectory of South Africa's search for a post-apartheid identity. South African identity should be seen as a subset of Africanity, as well as containing elements unique to the South African experience.

South Africans are currently coming to terms with their postcolonial, post-apartheid identities. They are struggling with what it means "to be South African in the 'new' South Africa? How can this identity achieve some kind of stability, some form of integrity?" (McEachern, 2001:223). Steyn (2001:xxi) argues that "South Africans, willingly or unwillingly, successfully or unsuccessfully, are engaged in one of the most profound collective psychological adjustments happening in the contemporary world".

Furthermore, situated as they are

in an existential moment that combines unique intersections of thrownness and agency, [South Africans] are selecting, editing, and borrowing from the cultural resources available to them to reinterpret old selves in the light of new knowledge and possibilities, while yet retaining a sense of personal congruence (Steyn, 2001:xxi-xxii).

This is clearly apparent in the space of Durban where Durbanites are adapting and playing with local cultural resources (based varyingly in representing ruralised, colonial tropes or more urban cultures as shall be discussed in the forthcoming chapters) in order to construct new post-apartheid identities. Steyn (2001) stresses the importance of the imagination in this task of shaping a new social identity. She is supported in this task by author and academic André Brink (1998:24) who pleads "for the need to *imagine the real*" in South Africa. Others have also called for the re-imagining of identities in post-apartheid South Africa (see Bass, 2001; Erasmus, 2001a). Imagining the real focuses attention on the fact that as South Africans

exert their imaginations to create coherent accounts that will render their past and future roles consistent with a positive self-regard, that will give meaning and security to their new positionalities, and will provide frameworks for their relationships with others, they invent and recombine fantasy and fact in both new and predictable ways (Steyn, 2001:xxii).

In Durban, such imaginings take effect through the reinvention of colonial tradition as well as through explorations into the different identities available which are articulated and created through the production, landscaping, contouring and writing of urban space.

Steyn (2001) observes that all social groupings are experiencing similar 'gaps' in identity in post-apartheid South Africa. Clearly, identity politics are heated: whose language, culture, or story can be said to have authority in South Africa when the end of apartheid has raised challenging questions as to what it is to be a South African, what it is to live in a new South Africa, whether South Africa is a nation, and, if so, what is its mythos, what requires to be forgotten and what remembered as we scour the past in order to understand the present and seek a path forward into the unknown future? (Chapman, 1998:85).

These concerns are consuming South Africans at present. Everyone, from journalists, to academics to cultural commentators has a view on the matter. The following discussion seeks to clear a path through these voices in order to understand the current shape of identity politics in South Africa.

Identity has always been problematic and there has never been one South African identity – even amongst the country's white population which was traditionally split into two streams: English and Afrikaans (see Chapman, 1998; Calpin, 1941). Contemporary identity is just as complex and contested. A recent controversy over Mbongeni Ngema's song 'Amandiya' illustrates this point. Part of Ngema's isiZulu song reads: "We need strong and brave men to confront Indians...they bribe you with roti and paku...we (African people) are poor because all things have been taken by Indians" (cited in Pather, 2002a:3). Accused of racist and inflammatory behaviour, Ngema (2002:7), at the height of the controversy, countered that his aim was "to give expression to what [he] observed in our society and which appeared to be a scourge in...the long run". Moreover, he hoped his song would "prick people's consciences to address such gross imbalances" (Ngema, 2002:7). Evidently then, post-apartheid South Africa is still plagued by division and South Africans still "lack a national consciousness" (Ndebele, 2001:77). Sadly, "we South Africans are strangers to each other" (Rajab, 2002:10). Indeed, the idea of South Africa as an inclusive nation is a myth (Ramutsindela, 2001). Ndebele (2001:75) argues that "we lack the central idea that defines us as South Africans". Mda (2002:9) observes that "South Africa is still fumbling along in search of an African identity".

Mamdani (1998) perceives this problem as rising out of the widespread presumption that South Africa is separated from the rest of Africa. This isolationism or exceptionalism is a popular position. Xenophobia is rampant in South Africa, specifically with regards to Africans from beyond the country's borders. Mamdani (1998) is highly

critical of this separatist way of thinking. He contends that “without an intellectual return to Africa, you cannot shed the notion of South African exceptionalism. And without a serious endeavour to shed that notion, you cannot have an intellectual renaissance” (Mamdani, 1998:9). Arguments such as these emphasise the importance of creating flexible, transnational or regional identities.

It is out of this context that Thabo Mbeki's notion of the 'African Renaissance' has come to occupy a central place in South Africa. A South African take on African identity, the “African Renaissance signals a new day in Africa by calling for a renewal of the identity of Africans” (Bongmba, 2004:295). This identity is envisioned in broad terms. Quoting from Mbeki's (1996:2) seminal 'I am an African' speech, the then Deputy President evocatively contends:

I owe my being to the Khoi and the San...I am formed of the migrants who left Europe to find a new home on our native land...In my veins courses the blood of the Malay slaves came from the East...I am the grandchild of the warrior men and women that Hintsa and Sekhukhune led, the patriots that Cetshwayo and Mphephu took to battle, the soldiers Moshoeshe and Ngungunyane taught never to dishonour the cause of freedom. My mind and knowledge of myself is formed by the victories that are the jewels of our African crown...earned from Isandhlwana, as Ethiopians and as the Ashanti of Ghana, as the Berbers of the desert...I am the grandchild who lays fresh flowers on the Boer graves at St Helena and the Bahamas...I come from those who were transported from India and China...Being part of all these people, and in the knowledge that none dare contest the assertion, I shall claim that – I am an African.

Ostensibly, Mbeki's rhetoric makes an appeal for an intellectual return to Africa but it is not a call for the revitalisation of solely black identities. Indeed, in the above extract, Mbeki points out the multiple sources from which he constitutes his own personal, African identity. Elsewhere, in the same speech, he states that Africanness is not defined by historical origins, colour, race or gender (Mbeki, 1996). Mbeki's African Renaissance has great potential for ushering in new sets of contemporary identity politics and thus, as a concept, requires further interrogation.

The African Renaissance has two meanings. The first is a cultural meaning, while the second political and administrative meaning is designed to usher in the African future (van Hensbroek, 2001; Ndebele, 2000). Therefore, the African Renaissance incorporates both cultural and economic dimensions. African unity in

culture, trade and resources are primary focus areas. Politically and economically these ideas received some impetus with the formation of the African Union in Durban in 2002 and Thabo Mbeki's peddling of his New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). There has been criticism however that the African Renaissance is focussed mainly on political and economic dimensions and pays considerably less attention to the cultural (Van Kessel, 2001). Nevertheless, the revitalisation of Africa's culture in the rebuilding of Africa is also crucial, as is the desire to reject the cultural assumption that Africa is uncivilised (Bongmba, 2004).

Bongmba (2004) suggests that Mbeki's call for renaissance includes the notion that the arts (which affect humanist values) must be harnessed to a project of recreating contemporary African cultural identities but not by virtue of appealing to 'traditional' artistic modes. However, other commentators are critical of Mbeki's recourse to a predominantly mythical, rural conception of African history and culture (van Kessel, 2001). As van Hensbroek (2001:7) points out, the ambition of the "culture-makers" of the European Renaissance "was not to simply reinstate classical values, classical themes and classical ideals, but to surpass them". The implicit value of this for the African Renaissance is that it holds the promise of critical and creative re-appropriation of African heritages in order to surpass them (van Hensbroek, 2001). Moreover, as Bongmba (2004) suggests, the African Renaissance could become an effective tool in the establishment of new postcolonial, African societies. A new conception of Africanness linked to urbanity, conceived of in hybrid, multicultural or creolised terms, "offers an opportunity to share in different cultural principles that may offer fresh perspectives on solving the continent's problems" (Bongmba, 2004:296). To date, however, the African Renaissance has not significantly engaged itself with the urban. Part IV of this thesis attempts to provide the African Renaissance with a substantive opportunity for forging new and creative approaches to reinvigorating the urban.

While an intellectual return to Africa in the vein of the African Renaissance is indeed important in contemporary South African identity configurations, significant attention must be given to the particularities of the South African situation. In this context, the question needs to be asked: "what would make South Africans...gravitate towards one another as a people or nation?" (Ndebele, 2001:75). Ndebele (2001:75) suggests, "there is a need...to build common values and invent social practices that would serve to bring the country together as a people or nation". Importantly, a reinvigorated and re-imagined identity should not be based on a return to

essentialised identities; rather, continual revision and reconstitution under changing and new circumstances should underpin identity politics (Ahluwalia, 2001).

The process of building a common South African identity will be difficult (Ramutsindela, 2001). It is no easy task because the population in South Africa is currently highly differentiated and fractured. In a multicultural society with a history of apartheid, it is difficult to imagine how community boundaries will be crossed. But such an imagining must be carefully undertaken (Chapman, 1998). Cynically denigrating constructions such as 'The Lost City' (a South African hotel complex with a mythic, 'African' theme), Chapman's (1998:88) argument about identity rests on the conviction that it "should not be about the simulacrum before it is about suffering". For many, the expiating nature of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has been crucial in this regard.

Identity transformations however do not need to be wholly cathartic or traumatic as with the case of the TRC. For example, many South Africans have acquired Ndebele artworks for their own personal art collections. These artworks have become part of the way by which South Africans identify themselves. Thus, cultural forms can provide a catalyst for the crossing of boundaries as these forms tend to resonate beyond their origin. Common, social values and practices are required if a common identity is to emerge (Ndebele, 2001; Zegeye, 2001b).

In the past, South Africa has lacked universal social values as the country has a history of centrally imposed, spatially separated identities. At the same time, shared South African identities did develop through common participation in resistance activities. The ANC government has responded to identity groups constructed by apartheid by advocating two strategies. The first strategy encompasses a commitment to affirmative action in order to address disparities and imbalances while the second promotes the comprehensive, 'all-inclusive' rainbow nation rhetoric. It seems that South African society is a governmental juggling act wherein unity and heterogeneity are continuously reconciled and negotiated. The ANC government's attempt to fashion a non-racial, national identity should take cognisance of the fact that "people are what they are by virtue of how they actually live, produce and reproduce themselves; how they actually shape and reshape their everyday world" (Zegeye, 2001b:344). It is necessary to theoretically and practically examine "whether there is sufficient commonality in our sufferings and our hopes, in the modes and sources of our oppressions and in the

creation of a social order to eliminate destructive divisions and forge a concrete unity in diversity" (Zegeye, 2001b:344).

As such, a number of studies seek to comprehend the intricacies of South African identities more closely. This project includes both texts on specific identity groups and works which cross the racial divide. Zegeye (2001c) provides a thorough study of South African identity as a whole by juxtaposing a number of critical papers that deal with South African identity politics. Other projects have been more specific. Different scholars have varying approaches to studying the redefinition of ethnic and racial identities in the 'new' South Africa. For example, Ballard (2004, 2002a, 2002b), Ballantine (2002), Bass (2001) and Steyn (2003, 2001) all analyse white identities but from different disciplinary perspectives. Ballard (2004, 2002a, 2002b) examines white identities and urban change in post-apartheid South Africa. Steyn (2001) confronts whiteness from within. She also considers constructions of whiteness in film (Steyn, 2003). Ballantine (2002) rethinks white identity in post-apartheid popular music while Bass (2001) undertakes a similar project in re-imagining white identities in two post-apartheid South African novels. Grobbelaar (2001) looks at Afrikaner nationalism as an ethnic identity while Erasmus (2002) considers white Afrikaners' post-apartheid identities. Coloured identities are tackled by Erasmus (2001b) whose edited collection examines the discomfiting and disconcerting meanings associated with coloured identities. Jones (1998) similarly interrogates what he terms the myth of a coloured identity. Martin (2001) also delves into the ambiguous and contradictory nature of coloured identity. Indian identities are examined by John (2002) who identifies the contested discourses of Indianness. Badsha (2001) and Hansen (2000) also negotiate Indianness, while Freund (1995) studies the Indian working class in Durban from a historical perspective. Pillay (2000) provides a popular account of history of the Indian community and its personalities. Ebr.-Vally (2001) considers Indian Muslims in South Africa. The issue of Zuluness, within a changing economic, political and cultural context, is examined in Morrell's (1996) edited collection. Dlamini (2001) and Campell, Maré and Walker (1995) also consider Zulu identities.

Coupled to all these studies is the realisation that the creation of new South African identities must be based on the understanding that no one racial group possesses the moral high ground; all South Africans have been profoundly shaped and affected by the past. Currently, discourses of politically authentic blackness being coterminous with Africanity (discussed above) and rainbow nationalism (discussed in the

previous chapter) allow for the outward projection of racist sentiments in South Africa. These discourses pathologise “such sentiments and practices creating a different form of Othering which conveniently absolves the black or liberal self from responsibility for and complicity with racism” (Erasmus, 2001a:26). South Africa’s challenge is for its inhabitants to realise that racist practises and sentiments are part of their present realities and are responsible for shaping their identities (Erasmus, 2001a).

The literature of Africanity and South Africanity thus raises important issues about the nature of identity on the continent. Unfortunately, in the past, race and culture have profoundly affected debates of who belongs. Additionally, McEachern (2001:243) contends that presently, it is not clear “whether all South African people can yet imagine sharing history and memory to the point where they can embrace a clear new *South African* identity”. Moreover, the content of ‘South African’ seems to be uncertain (McEachern, 2001). McEachern (2001:243) argues that this “leaves something lessor (or different) available as identity.

McEachern (2001) suggests that this lessor/ different identity could be conceived of in terms of city identity; in terms of people talking about their identity in relation to the city. Using the example of people forcibly removed from District Six in Cape Town, McEachern (2001) illustrates how those exiled are currently using identity to reappropriate the city that was taken from them. She contends that as a result of apartheid’s exclusions, embracing a particular city identity “*is new, is engaging with present and future in a new polity, so it is also attractive, and attainable, as a position*” (McEachern, 2001:243). This “*is radical, precisely because it is a re-appropriation, a demand for inclusion and the claiming of an identity taken away by apartheid as a fundamental principle of that regime*” (McEachern, 2001:243). In this manner, city identity provides a way into new, inclusive notions of identity in post-apartheid South Africa.

This is an important insight for the purposes of this thesis which seeks to examine the co-constituting relationship between urbanity and identity. It is clear then that one site emerges continually as a pressure cooker of activity: the city. Indeed, the urban is a critical site of identity contestation. Within the space of Durban, identities based on ‘traditionalised’, ‘ruralised’ conceptions of Africa compete with the more fluid urban identities based in contemporary realities (as will become evident later in this thesis). Clearly, Durban embodies the tensions and conflicts manifest in postcolonial

urban identity politics. In order to appreciate this, the discussion turns directly to a framing of Durban's urbanity.

Framing Durban's Urbanity

Durban's identity as an African city is fast gaining currency amongst municipal officials, journalists and academics (Apelgren Interview, 2003¹; Sutcliffe Interview, 2003; Madlala, 2002; Makgoba, 2002). Yet, competing representational strategies in Durban give rise to different urban identities which varyingly seek to de-link Africanity from urbanity or alternatively, strengthen the bond. Before examining this tenuous connection more closely, it is necessary to briefly locate the scholarship written on Durban within the broader theoretical trends of South African urbanity. Moreover, it is useful to familiarise oneself with the relevant literature on Durban in order to appreciate the concerns which infuse urban scholarship on that city.

Durban, like any other South African city is an intriguing object of analysis. Fashioned firstly by colonialism and segregated more emphatically by apartheid, the South African city features an uneven geography of race, housing, wealth, development, debt and gender (Adebayo, 2002). South African cities share many similar concerns with their continental counterparts and can often benefit from comparative research (for example, see Bouillon et al., 2002; Briggs & Yeboah, 2001; Rakodi, 1997).² Most African cities exist in a similar state of tension between uncertainty and optimism (Adebayo, 2002; Mabogunje, 2000). However, there is no typical African city (Simon, 1989). Variations between North, South, West and East Africa and different degrees of colonial contact have resulted in a panoply of distinctive cities. This is not to say that one cannot generalise about African cities³; it is just to say that it is possible to be eclectic in one's approach. African urbanity is a function of activities, dynamics, behaviours and processes whose internal logic can be explained in terms of African cities' specificities

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² Robinson (2003d) points out that there is a rich tradition of theory dealing with African, urban life particularly on the Zambian Copperbelt. Such research, conducted by Max Gluckman and the 'Manchester School' in the 1950s and 1960s, attempts to contribute African, non-Western perspectives to mainstream urban studies. These insights have been largely marginalised. This clearly needs to be addressed as, in addition to enriching mainstream theory, such theoretical imperatives can help illuminate more relevant, comparative and useful understandings of African cities.

³ Indeed, Simon (1999) provides a useful, general discussion of urban change and development in postcolonial Africa.

(Swilling, Simone & Khan, 2002). Thus said, here African urbanity will be illustrated in terms of South Africa's (and particularly, Durban's) specificities.

As pointed out in the introduction to this thesis, there is a wealth of literature on South African urbanity; however, most of this literature has been focussed on policy relevance, desegregation, inequality, poverty, politics and crime. Robinson (2004b, 2003b, 2002c, 1998b) suggests that the spaces of interaction of urban life have largely been neglected. Indeed, there are many points of cultural and racial integration – as will be drawn out in the following chapter. The field of urban studies has been enriched by a number of scholars seeking to construct a “supra-racial history” which pays increasing attention to these interactions (Seekings, 2000:835). In this regard, two rich and nuanced texts devoted to Cape Town's urban and social history have been compiled (Bickford-Smith, van Heyningen & Worden, 1999; Worden, van Heyningen & Bickford-Smith, 1998). Other contributors to this field (to a greater or lesser extent) include Lemon (1991a), Chipkin (1993), Bickford-Smith (1995), Crankshaw and Parnell (1999), Wilkinson (2000), van Onselen (2001), Western (2002), Beall, Crankshaw and Parnell (2002) and Tomlinson et al. (2003a). Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter 1, geographers and others interested in the urban-cultural nexus have paid increasing attention to cultural interrogations of the South African city. Furthermore, research has been focussed on the impact of identity on the urban form (Visser, 2003b, 2002). Nevertheless, the majority of efforts to date have approached the cultural-urban realm from a micro or localised scale. Less has been written about culture at the city scale and it this gap which this thesis seeks to address.

The importance of a city scale, cultural visioning of Durban cannot be underestimated. It is only through such a lens that one can appreciate the mutual entanglements which have contributed to Durban's imbricated social history. In this regard, Freund and Padayachee (2002b:4) contend that “Durban was...a place where the market brought together, in classic colonial form, a fertile mix of people who created in some respects a common urban culture”. In his book on the Indian Working Class of Durban, Freund (1995:40) illustrates this point by demonstrating how Durban's Indian population were able – through observation, work and leisure – to increasingly “assimilate aspects of a racially diverse, colonially created, urban South African world while still retaining a basic and in some respects deepening identification with a neo-Indian, home-based culture”. Notwithstanding this, Durban was also the site of a number of segregative measures that entrenched racial division and dominance. Thus, identity

construction in cities like Durban operates not only via processes of creolisation and hybridity but also through exclusionary conceptions of identity based on notions of ethnicity and race inherited as a legacy of past, colonial codes of representation (Wasserman & Jacobs, 2003). Such alternating postcolonial identity reconstructions are indicative of South Africa's present moment. This insight is developed in the forthcoming chapters which consider Durban's identities as they are operationalised and represented through both exclusionary notions and creolising tendencies.

Before considering the representational strategies of post-apartheid Durban, it is necessary to reflect on the healthy legacy of urban scholarship on the Durban cityscape. Similarly to South African urban studies as a whole, this scholarship tends to focus on political and socio-economic questions. Urban history has received particular attention. Swanson's (1964) doctoral thesis on the rise of multicultural Durban is key in this regard. His work has resonance not only in Durban but has enriched South African urban history as a whole. Maylam and Edwards' (1996) volume, detailing black African life in twentieth century Durban, has also been crucial in terms of understanding the city's social history. Moreover, Bjorvig's (1994) urban history doctoral dissertation contributes to an understanding of the formation of a settler elite in Durban between 1824 and 1910 and its role in the development of Durban as a colonial city. A number of other studies examine Durban's urban history with particular emphasis on segregation (Popke, 2003; Scott, 2003; Maharaj, 1999). Freund (2001b) studies contrasts in urban segregation between Durban, South Africa and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire.

The disciplinary boundaries between urban history, society and political economy necessarily blur. Cross-boundary work on Durban is evident in Hemson's (e.g. see 1996, 1975-1976) work on dock-workers as well as in Freund's (1995) work on the Indian working class. Another early, but major contribution, to Durban's social, political and economic scholarship is Kuper, Watts and Davies' (1958) study of Durban's racial ecology. This volume examines racial segregation during the implementation of the Group Areas Act (1950). Freund and Padayachee (2002a) observe that the work of activist-scholars such as Brij Maharaj and Jeff McCarthy have also made substantial contributions to geographical studies of Durban's society and economy. Freund and Padayachee (2002a) provide the most current platform from which to examine Durban's society and political economy. They have most recently likened Durban to a vortex, suggesting that the literature paints Durban as a place of change and restlessness.

Durban, Freund and Padayachee (2002a) advocate, is a maelstrom of the social, the economic and also, importantly, the cultural.

A number of other researchers have tried to capture this essence of Durban, locating their work mainly within a socio-economic framework. Accordingly, Grest (2002) and Bouillon (2002) examine citizenship, local government and governance in Durban. Nel, Hill and Maharaj (2003) document Durban's economy while Moffet and Freund (2004) consider the role that elites have on Durban's economic development. Maharaj and Ramballi (1998) examine local development strategies in Durban. Pillay (1996) provides a rather dry account of the history, economics and politics of the Durban functional region. Foreign street traders are considered by Hunter and Skinner (2003). Quality of life (e.g. Moller, 2001) and gender (e.g. Todes, 1995) have also received attention. Urban renewal is considered from an economic, developmental perspective by Khosa and Naidoo (1998). More excitingly, Grant and Scott (1996) also tackle urban renewal but begin to delve into questions of Durban's identity and image, as does Grant (1992) in her study of the historical geography of Durban's beachfront.

Other research attempts to build a more cultural perspective of the city. In his mainly photographic book on the Grey Street area of central Durban, Badsha (2001) attempts to find new ways of representing and reinterpreting identity, space and history. He attempts to display the amalgamated social fabric of this specific inner-city space. This includes a commitment to finding new ways of seeing past race. Instead of viewing Grey Street as an Indian city space, this book attempts to link Grey Street to the wider city scale (Durban and/ or the South African city more generally) space which transcends racial categorisation. According to Zegeye and Ahluwalia (2001:22), the "images evoked by the scenes in the Grey Street area represent what is possible in the new South Africa in terms of deracialising public spaces and communities long separated under apartheid". What is important about city spaces like Grey Street (as well as District Six and Sophiatown) is that "the everyday life of South Africa is played out as [South Africans] attempt to live in spaces originally, but not successfully, defined by the colonial and apartheid state as signifying racial difference" (Zegeye & Ahluwalia, 2001:23). Also worth noting is Weinberg, Robbins, & Mhlope's (2002) slim travel/ photographic book which conveys their impressions of Durban as an African city. This work makes tentative steps towards exploring the African fabric of Durban.

There is therefore increased attention to the notion that "the South African city provides a fascinating laboratory for the study of urban culture and form" (Parnell,

1997:891). Popke's (1997) exciting paper on deconstructing identity and space in Cato Manor in Durban is a notable example of such thinking. His appreciation of spectres and the city is highly innovative in the African context. Moreover, together with Richard Ballard, Jeff Popke has produced a number of culturally-inspired urban analyses. In this regard, Popke's (2001) paper scrutinises the link between urban policy and public discourses about space and race in the 1940s in Durban; Ballard (2004, 2002a, 2002b) examines white, Durban identities and their responses to urban change; and Popke and Ballard (2004) examine a similar theme in their interrogation of reactions to street trade in Durban. These studies illustrate how subjects are popularly represented and constructed as citizens or strangers in the space of Durban.

It is this very link between identity and urbanity which requires further development. A limited number of scholars have begun to explore the connections between the urban and African identity politics. Mbembe (2002) begins to link Africanity to the 'polis' (or the city) and citizenship. The linking of African identity to the city is crucial; for, while the interplay between postcolonial and multicultural identities and the urban has been established (see previous chapter), the link between Africanity and the urban is far more tenuous. It is apposite to investigate how African identities have been written about in the urban context. More specifically, the aim is to examine how African urbanity has been envisioned and represented in order to provide a platform for the thesis' subsequent interrogation of the competing representations of Durban's identity and urbanity.

Urban Africans: Representations of Africa, Urbanity and Rurality

"the towns of the Colony are the special places of abode for the white men"
(Chief Magistrate J.C.C. Chadwick, cited in Swanson, 1976:163).

African urbanity? An oxymoron? What is it? At the outset, it becomes clear that, to a large extent, whenever African urbanity is discussed, it refers to the urban status of black Africans. However, black Africans have been historically constructed and represented as temporary strangers in the city. Which means that African urbanity, in the sense of Africanity developed above, has scarcely been interrogated. Thus, the central question rests on how African identities have been represented in relation to the city.

The notion of citizenship (and its implication for who belongs) leads one to this representational quest. It has been argued that citizenship "is widely held to be the

dominant, and modern, identity which should subordinate and coordinate all others" (Grest, 2002:38). Bouillon's (2002:3) definition of citizenship is wide; to her, citizenship is merely "a matter of membership of the city". Regardless, of birth, origin or movement, citizenship is seen as open to all whom live, negotiate, communicate and use a city. Similarly, Grest (2002:39) contends that "concrete meanings of urban citizenship are being defined by the daily practices of citizens, by their interactions with each other, whether organised or unorganised, and with the state in its various forms at the local level". Furthermore, citizenship implies a sense of common values which are constantly negotiated (Bouillon, 2002).

Cities are intense sites of contestation of practices and forms of identity and in South Africa, forging a new urban citizenship invokes multiple challenges (Grest, 2002). In the context of South African cities, citizenship thus becomes crucial in defining a city's identity. Citizenship is however underpinned by a representational tactic which ascertains who belongs. Therefore, Bouillon (2002) argues that, in the context of Durban, citizenship can be used as a means of discrimination, conflict and injustice.

Bouillon (2002:10) contends that the "link between city and citizenship takes on a particular relief in South Africa, and in Durban for our case, given the particular ways in which the relationship between the people and the (local) city have been historically framed". At the same time as the historical local city has been the concrete centre of Durban, it has also been opposed symbolically to the townships, remote suburbs and rural areas. This means black Africans have long been denied an urban identity.

The relationship between the South African black person and the city was heavily moderated and restricted under both colonialism and apartheid. Both of these systems "created a division between the subjects and spaces of a modern, urban European domain and a 'primitive', rural African realm" (Popke, 2003:248). In the periphery, black "Africans remained collectively defined as tribal subjects" (Lester, Nel & Binns, 2000:141). In this vein, black "Africans were viewed through lenses of alterity, which secured the privileged spaces of urban modernity as a domain of white subjectivity" (Popke, 2003:256). Discourses of 'civilisation' and 'progress' were used to define, in part, black African subjects and their difference was "codified in the anachronistic spaces of the rural native reserves and their paternalistic administration" (Popke, 2003:256).

However, the expanding colonial economy drew black Africans into migrant labour and resulted in their increased presence in Durban (Popke, 2003). From the outset, colonial Durban “needed black labour, but were reluctant to accept those who provided it as fellow citizens” (Lemon, 1991b:1). Popke (2003:256) argues that this black “African presence within (European) urban modernity threatened to erode the privileged position of the white colonial subject, and eventually forced a renegotiation of the paternal legislation of space through which colonial alterity was structured”. The colonial authorities felt that greater control was needed over the regulation and supply of black African labour (Lester, Nel & Binns, 2000). Fears abounded regarding the presence of black Africans in the colonial city and were articulated through a number of discourses around sanitation, health, order and lawlessness. Towns, especially Durban, were identified “as a destructive environment, unnatural and alien to Africans, corrupting the hapless but noble savages with all the worst features of civilization and creating a menace to the White community” (Swanson, 1976:163). Popke (2003:259) argues that it “was not only the rise of an independent class of urban Africans that was the source of anxiety, for the economy depended upon a *circulatory* system of labor migration, and thus the moral degeneracy in the city threatened to ‘infect’ the surrounding countryside as well”. The colonial administrative system in Natal “depended upon a division of space between the European urban areas, and the anachronistic space of the reserves, populated by quiescent natives who accepted their paternal Masters” (Popke, 2003:259).

The challenge of racial heterogeneity to the space of the white (modern) city stimulated the city’s policy-makers to regulate and control the space of Durban by means of legislation (Popke, 2002). Black Africans were regarded as temporary visitors to the city, unable to ever fully assimilate themselves with the modern requirements of urban living. James Stuart (cited in Swanson, 1976:168), in his magisterial capacity, argued in 1904 that black African people:

should, for many years to come, be regarded as mere visitors to the town...and though they give us labour, they...have no right to share in the same privileges that regular citizens do...It seems to me it will always be a fair argument to say Natives may not do acts which tend to admit them, directly or indirectly, to the society of the more civilised race, simply because they do not understand the privileges sought.

Similarly, J.C.C. Chadwick (cited in Swanson, 1976:163), Chief Magistrate, also contended in 1904:

The Natives have come to look upon the towns as their happy hunting grounds...Let them understand that the towns of the Colony are the special places of abode of the white men, who are the governing race, and that if they go to those towns to seek employment they must comply with the regulations...for the peace and order of the town, which they must be taught to look upon as one of the Supreme Chief's [Governor of Natal] great kraals.

These quotes illustrate the principles that shaped urban race relations in Durban and South Africa under colonialism and later, under apartheid. Urban modernity and citizenship were seen as the exclusive preserve of Durban's white residents, and black Africans were to be seen as no more than temporary migrants (Popke, 2003). Urban, black Africans were thus "viewed essentially...as a labour force whose workers (and their dependants) 'belonged' in the bantustans which 'grand apartheid' forged from the reserves, and as a necessary evil whose numbers should be minimized" (Lemon, 1991b:17). The urban/ white – rural/ black African dichotomy was therefore entrenched early on in Durban's history and representational frameworks and has consequently been difficult to disturb as will be illustrated in Chapters 5 and 6.

This is not to say that the presence of black Africans in cities was ignored in the early part of the twentieth century. Phillips' (1933) book is a notable exception for its time. Phillips (1933:390) is sympathetic to the plight of urban black Africans and advocates a number of reforms to improve and legitimise their position as "permanent urban resident[s]". Still, one of the book's central problems concerns the African "transition from tribalism to a civilised type of life" (Phillips, 1933:x). Thus, his outlook is somewhat tempered by his views on how exactly black Africans can fit into the city. He contends that "White South Africa can, with profit, spend a good deal of time and energy influencing Africans so that they will find it pleasant and profitable to adapt themselves to the life of a civilised community" (Phillips, 1933:384). The basic assumption is that black Africans do not belong in the city unless they conform to certain 'civilised' standards. There is no place for them permanently in the city if they do not.

Many of the attitudes which have allowed such thinking to exist have their roots in the 'Durban System' which initiated a particular representational code that effectively excluded black Africans from the urban imagery. In a seminal piece on the roots of urban apartheid, Swanson (1976) interrogates the 'Durban System' and its effect on racial practices which emanated from Durban. Central concepts and basic elements of urban segregation were developed in the first decade of the twentieth century in

Durban (and later reproduced throughout South Africa) through the 'Durban System' which was essentially a method for administering the city's black African population. The 'Durban System' was operationalised through a municipal beer monopoly. In Durban, legal consumption of beer by black Africans was permitted only in municipal beer halls. Hence, the system controlled black Africans' access to alcohol. The system was a very successful and effective mechanism in boosting and bolstering Durban's economy (Freund & Padayachee, 2002b; la Hausse, 1984; Swanson, 1976). However, revenue from the sale of beer to the black African population "became the key financial support of a more intensive and comprehensive programme of paternalistic administration than ever before, tending with relative efficiency to restrain Africans to barracks and locations" (Swanson, 1976:174). Barracks, locations and later townships were consistently envisioned as 'tribal' spaces despite their situation in the city (Minkley, 1998). Moreover, accommodation in such spaces was designed to be temporary – only available to those working in Durban. Robins (1998:468) explains that the "denial of urban residential rights to...black South Africans had at root the idea that the proper place of the 'native' was in the rural areas, where authentic African cultures could be preserved". This administrative system thus attempted to entrench impermanent residence in Durban, creating the impression that black Africans were merely transitory figures on the urban scene.

The 'Durban System' bequeathed a legacy of representation that implies that Africans are rural (and black). The perception that black Africans are only temporary visitors in the urban environment supersedes simple racist ideologies and infuses much subconscious thought even today. In this context African urbanity is, at worst, simply unthinkable; or, at best, difficult to comprehend. Accordingly, in terms of Durban's current representational strategies, representing the urban becomes increasingly difficult for two reasons. Firstly, it is difficult to accommodate urban black Africans in the representational equation because no easily available, popular and widespread urban imagery exists which adequately depicts them. The knee-jerk reaction is to resort to rural imagery. Secondly, the rest of the Durban's inhabitants become excluded by an urban representational tactic which makes application to rural imagery. Chapters 5 and 6 develop these themes in greater detail by discussing the mainstream material and discursive representational strategies of Durban.

In the wider context of Africa, these representational ideas are reinforced by a multitude of media sources. Instead of presenting Africa as urban and dynamic, Africa is seen as rural, static, timeless and unchanging. In his study of ten contemporary,

introductory human geography textbooks available in North America, Myers (2001) interrogates the representations of Africa which the texts make. He concludes that urban Africa appears rarely in texts; where it does, it is "often to teach about 'overurbanization'" (Myers, 2001:526). He notes that only a few textbooks, "in passing, note the creativity of African vernacular architecture or settlement design... Only one of these relies on recent research, so that contemporary work on urban Africa, African architecture, and settlement structure is not utilized" (Myers, 2001:526). Urban Africa is similarly maligned by news coverage of Africa, as in the case of reporting on Rwanda, which largely rested on presenting Africa as "a timeless and placeless realm of 'tribal' conflict" (Myers, Klak & Koehl, 1996:21). The news imagery of similar conflicts, such as the civil war in Bosnia, is presented in a very different framework (see Myers, Klak & Koehl, 1996). Accordingly, television, documentaries, newspapers and films "are but of few of the...avenues along which misleading and stereotypical portraits of Africa are perpetuated" (Myers, 2000:64; see also *The Mercury*, 2005a). Myers (2000:64) argues that "doom-saying analyses of Africa frequently found in North America's cornerstone textbooks for introductory geography, as well as in broader media representations, do not speak to [the] high points" of African experience.

While media and academic sources represent Africa with doomsday rhetoric, another perception of Africa exists. This perception is perpetuated by both tourism and museum exhibits. Tourist representations of Africa have received increasing attention in recent years (for example, see Norton, 1996; Rassool & Witz, 1996; White, 1995). Often appealed to in tourist representations is the trope of Africa as a ruralised and 'wild' Eden which exists independently of temporal and spatial markers. According to Whatmore and Thorne (1998:435), popular perception has it that the wild is "a place without 'us', populated by creatures (including surreptitiously, 'uncivilised' humans) at once monstrous and wonderful". Hardly any mention is given to history, culture or architecture outside that of the indigenous tribes. This implies that Africa "has no history of civilisation but instead is a land of spectacular natural beauty occupied only by wild animals and savages" (Norton, 1996:366). This idea has become the source of a number of critical responses which problematise the notion of nature and wilderness as a social construct (see Brooks, 2005, 2001b, 2000; Whatmore, 1999; Cronon, 1995; Soper, 1995). The central tenet of this school of thought contends "that the idea of nature as a pristine space 'outside society' is an historical fallacy" (Whatmore, 1999:10). This theme will be discussed in detail in Part III.

Some museums are also responsible for presenting biased representations of Africa (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001). Many museums directly benefited from colonialism. Securing exhibits from the colonies, colonial museums often presented selective views of African reality, which persist even today. Sometimes, the effects of this type of exploitation were particularly nefarious. Indigenous people, like Saartjie Baartman were transported to Europe during colonialism's heyday and exhibited as examples of 'primitive culture' from 'wild' Africa for the rest of their natural lives and indeed, even beyond their deaths.

The Martin and Osa Johnson Safari Museum in Kansas is one museum (amongst many) which presents problematic encounters with Africa (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001). Hall (1995:198) has argued that the "world only has one role for Africa – as a destiny for other people's expeditions, and as the home of 'dark forces'". Many have "seen this point – and have become wealthy" (Hall, 1995:198). Certainly, Martin and Osa Johnson appear to fit into this mould. The Johnsons made nine expeditions to Africa and the South Pacific. Additionally, they made wildlife films, a television series and wrote a number of books, introducing 'wild' Africa to the general American public. Indeed, the museum claims that they made the words 'simba' and 'safari' household words. In addition to the Johnson archives, the museum holds a collection of wildlife art, maps of exploration of Africa and the South Pacific as well as a collection of explorers' narratives and journals depicting their African 'adventures'. The museum is meant to educate; instead, it conveys "a representation of the world – and especially Africa – rooted in the colonial imagery" (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001:494). Without doubt, the "museum's displays reinforce the notion of a wild, natural Africa which is attractive and exotic as a result of its landscape, wildlife and primitive peoples" (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001:494). The museum's version of events "downplays the effects of colonialism, as well as the existence of significant African populations (and their impact on the landscape)" (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001:494-495). Furthermore, the museum "asserts the continuing existence well into the twentieth century of an Africa of pristine wilderness, which offer both an escape from modern life and the adventures and excitement of the safari and the jungle trek" (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001:495).

Foregrounding the existence and impact of colonialism would invite risking "enervating both the Hollywood representation of a wild, untamed Africa, and, concomitantly, the notion of the Johnsons as adventurers and explorers" (Caminero-

Santangelo & Myers, 2001:495). Politicising Africa “could only attenuate the American (and Hollywood) notion of Africa as a kind of wild Disneyland for adults...Like the real Disneyland, Africa must be sanitised of the historical and the political” (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001:495). Brooks (2000:65) points out that this “make-believe world of Disney Africa has featured in numerous films”. Indeed, recent big-budget Hollywood movies such as *Mighty Joe Young*, *The Ghost and the Darkness* and *I Dream of Africa* perpetuate stereotypical and misleading ideas about Africa (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001; Brooks, 2000). Hall (1995:179) argues that the “consequence has been a widely held view of Africa’s past, as prevalent in Hollywood...which allows for little change and which inevitably seeks inspiration from outside the continent”. Hall (1995) implies that European and American imaginings of the African continent, in terms of possession and conquest, have shaped popular culture, best-sellers by Wilbur Smith and Rider Haggard and film romances. These views also guide resort development like the ‘Lost City’ complex mentioned above or Durban’s uShaka Marine World (discussed in Chapter 6). Caminero-Santangelo and Myers (2001:496) argue that American plot-lines on Africa continually “serve up white heroes as corrective forces to the injustices (repeatedly committed by blacks) against nature in Africa, happily continuing to bypass the real colonial histories that engendered those – and other – injustices”. The Martin and Osa Johnson Safari Museum is a localised “version of this Hollywood Africa” (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001:496). The images presented to museum visitors (or uShaka Marine World visitors) correspond to their already received ideas of Africa and nothing is done to destabilise these perceptions or tropes of an imagined Africa that is wild, paradisaical, timeless and occupied by vanishing tribes in an untouched, primordial wilderness (Caminero-Santangelo & Myers, 2001). These tropes are interrogated in further detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

Thus, while imagery of “the African as noble savage” (Norton, 1996:362) abounds, very little attention is given to urban expressions of Africanness and identity. Any attention to urbanity, certainly in popular conceptions, is heavily biased. African cities are imagined to constitute the epitome of postcolonial dystopia. They are thus often unilaterally presented in travelogues as chaotic, disordered centres of urban decay, degeneration, misery and death (Crush, 2000). Moreover, as previously discussed, the presence of the black African in the city is an anathema. Historically, in South Africa, the city has been seen as the bastion of civilisation and the modern, whereas, rural areas are seen to be barbarous, primitive and uncivilised. However, the

city is no longer intact as a vessel of civilisation. The influx of black Africans from this 'rural preserve' has provoked much anxiety, on the part of whites, in the post-apartheid context. Ballard (2002a) explores white Durbanites' responses to the arrival of street traders, squatters and non-white middle class suburban dwellers. Popke and Ballard (2004) develop this theme in relation to people's reactions to street trade in Durban. In many cases desegregation has destroyed the familiar boundaries which govern the activities which 'should' occur in urban areas and activities that 'should not'. A character in J.M. Coetzee's (1999) recent novel, *Disgrace*, reflects this sentiment. Entering Cape Town via the N2, he notes the expansion of the shanty settlements. Furthermore, he observes that the stream of cars on the freeway has "to slow down while a child with a stick herds a stray cow off the road" (Coetzee, 1999:175). Incomprehensibly, "the country is coming to the city" (Coetzee, 1999:175). It appears as if 'wild', rural Africa is taking over. Moreover, some white South Africans are resistant to the emergence of ritual cattle-killing in the suburbs by their new non-white neighbours (Ballard, 2002a, 2002b). Cattle-killing is viewed as barbaric, an activity which should be confined to spaces far from the civilised space of the city (see Philo [1995] for further discussion regarding slaughtering practices and cities). The familiar division between rurality and urbanity has been disrupted. The comforting boundaries and histories of city and country are disintegrating.

At the same time, resistance to practices such as ritual cattle-killing and the increased presence of street traders and squatters invite discourses which sever anew black Africans from legitimate presence in the city. Representational tactics such as those employed by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' marketing campaign and uShaka Marine World seek to re-invoke colonial tropes which fix the familiar boundaries of identity. Unable to envision urban Africa, such efforts perversely return to the idea of Africa (and Durban) as rural, primitive and the preserve of indigenous culture (see Chapters 5 and 6). This effectively ignores and denies the broader constituents available from which Durban could draw on in order to represent itself and its identity. In this regard, the identities of black African Durbanites are still problematic and in some ways, provisional.

The outcome of such representational strategies develops the perception that, in many ways, "the city fails to exist in Africa" (Swilling, Simone & Khan, 2002:309; Simone, 1998:175). African cities are approached by many observers, national authorities and even local populations as "the densification of essentially localised conglomerations of ethnicity, histories of settlement and estates with often feudal

characteristics" (Swilling, Simone & Khan, 2002:309). The possibility of viewing African urban experiences as comprising a definitive part of the urban (as opposed to 'folk culture' or 'tribal') has been largely surpassed in favour of developmental agendas. Such development agendas view African cities and their inhabitants merely as the sites for development (Robinson, 2003d). This is a key point for this thesis as development imagery – such as that employed in uShaka Marine World (discussed in Chapter 6) – at times legitimises representations which rely on outdated stereotypes instead of drawing on the richness available in urban spaces.

Refreshingly, there are approaches to the African city that see it as a contested space full of interesting and exciting contradictions. Matshikiza (2004) and Robinson (2004b) typify this kind of approach. In addition to a sense of realism about urban realities, xenophobia and crime, such writers highlight poise in spite of poverty and emphasise the rich music and expression of movement which permeates the street. In their view, African cities are further enriched by the presence of informal street traders whose style of capitalism is aggressive, argumentative and inflects a particular texture onto the cityscape. Moreover, such approaches are attentive to African city life's shared meanings and intimate that despite a history of legislated segregation, African spaces have always been the sites of multiple crossings, overlappings and shared experiences. Such perspectives offer alternative views of the African city. It is on this tradition that the current thesis seeks to build on in Chapters 4, 7 and 8.

African cities, like Durban, are privileged sites of the postcolonial. Thus, it is in the urban context and, most importantly in African cities, that new representational codes of the postcolonial can be identified which in spirit and execution are the antitheses of colonially-inspired representational tactics. African cities are therefore the visual symbol of the postcolonial. A mixture of contestation, decay, violence, the modern and traditional, African cities give rise to new urban languages, rites and identities. Constituted not only out of 'traditional' or colonial cultures, these new identities (as discussed in Part IV) are garnered from the various strategies of daily urban life. The African city is a space of negotiation between the built fabric of the colonial past and the new services and freedoms of the present. It is also a space of migrants from rural areas no longer able to sustain them. Urban black Africans are no longer 'strangers' in the city but are fashioning new forms of connection, communication and methods of survival. Out of the textured fabric of the postcolonial African city, fresh representations of these new urban identities can initiate an imaginative de-linking of identity from stereotypical

notions of Africa in order to create a more nuanced urban, African geography. As this thesis illustrates, African cities are therefore spaces of cultural expression where Africa is tackled in all its complexity. In such spaces, urban life is interrogated and explored through music, theatre, performance art, dance, fashion, film, food and language. It is crucial to dissect the imaginings of African urban life created by these different genres – a task which is undertaken in Part IV of this thesis (Ahluwalia & Zegeye, 2003; Triulzi, 1996).

Consequently, as this chapter has detailed, this current project is intrinsically concerned with the images of Africa used in connection with the city and their implication for contouring or landscaping a postcolonial, urban African future. In other words, this thesis focuses on how African urbanity is depicted in Durban. While there are so many opportunities attentive to a representational code which links a creolised African culture to the urban (as evident in Part IV), it is more often easier (as illustrated in Part III) – due to the legacy of the 'Durban System' – to use rural imagery in the context of a history of depicting black Africans as not urban.

Conclusion

Exploring African and South African identity and fusing it to the space of the city; and, exposing conventional stereotypes and representations of Africa and African urbanity have been the aims of this chapter. In Durban, manifestations of African identity and urbanity are certainly ambiguous, sourcing their imagery from vastly different contexts. Consequently, it is apposite to initiate a number of readings of Durban (which boasts prolifically about its Africanity) in order to illuminate the city's grappling with the constituting factors of African urbanity. To proclaim an African status implies that Durban has explored the terrain of Africanness and filled it with productive options and suggestions. Or maybe not? The reality points to the fact that Durban, like most other postcolonial, African cities, is a city of identity contradictions, negotiations and contestations. Different actors make application to different constituting elements as the subsequent chapters illustrate. Despite an imbricated social history and origin (discussed in Chapter 4), some Durban actors have tended to reinvent colonial tropes and representational practices in their depiction of Durban and its identity (see Chapters 5 and 6). Such strategies are tied to narrow, ruralised and mainly exclusive notions of African identity. However, others (as detailed in Chapters 7 and 8) have chosen to challenge these ruralised identities in favour of harnessing Africanity to more urban

manifestations of culture. Parts III and IV thus seek to read Durban as an African diver(C)ity in order to offer a vibrant, urban-cultural understanding of the African city and its identity.

University of Cape Town

Part III

Reinventing the Colonial

The preceding discussion in Part II regarding the African diver(C)ity provides the platform for Part III's assessment of the manner in which colonial tropes have been reinvigorated in Durban's current context. The literature discussed thus far on postcolonial, urban identities, within the context of Africa, frames the present reading of the various guises of Durban's urban, African identity.

City identity, as the previous chapters have elucidated, is a transient, ephemeral entity. When framing or reading the city of Durban, it is important to establish that the city's identity has never been stable. Indeed, Durban's identity has always been shifting and hybrid. Chapter 4 illustrates the co-constituting nature of pre-colonial Durban's form and society. Certainly, Durban's early days were marked by a number of creolising practices. The chapter serves to suggest that Durban is a palimpsest space and that current, Africanised attempts to contour the city, as will be seen in Part IV, in reality have a long embedded precedent and history.

However, Chapter 4 also highlights the manner in which formal colonialism attempted to suppress Durban's pre-colonial imbrications. Such obscuring continues to the present where the creolised origins of Durban and its identity have been largely sidelined by various entities within the city who seek to have some bearing on Durban's identity and urbanity. In this manner, largely within the context of tourism, colonial stereotypes are reinvented for the purpose of 'selling' a traditionalised, ruralised notion of Durban's city identity. In this context, Durban's identity is operationalised through a powerful discursive-material dualism in which discursive ideas have manifestation in the physical, built environment.

In Durban, discursive versions of city identity are set in motion through the KwaZulu-Natal Tourism Authority's provincial, 'Kingdom of the Zulu', tourism campaign. Chapter 5 examines this campaign in substantial detail. The chapter first contextualises the selling of Durban within the broader theoretical literature on selling cities. Thereafter, the chapter provides a general critique of tourism in KwaZulu-Natal before tackling the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign in more depth. Durban's identity as a city is inextricably linked with rural codes made prevalent through the provincial 'Kingdom of the Zulu'

campaign. Thus, the chapter illustrates how the province of KwaZulu-Natal is portrayed within the tropes of adventure, paradise and indigenous culture. Thereafter, the narrative directly considers the implications of considering Durban as a gateway to the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' and its treatment within the same tropes of adventure, paradise and indigenous culture. The 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign supports an obscured, colonially reinvented identity of Durban which draws its foundations from particularised notions of colonialism and romanticism.

Chapter 6 illustrates how such romantic and colonial imperatives find material manifestation in the built environment through the uShaka Marine World development. Using the tropes outlined in the previous chapter, Chapter 6 examines uShaka Marine World as the material outcome of discursive strategies which seek to inhibit Durban's identity within particularly ruralising codes. The chapter suggests that projects such as uShaka Marine World and the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' serve to position the urban firmly within the conventions of rurality, paradise and unchanging 'primitive' culture.

However, Part III offers merely one version of Durban's identity. Others within the city, as will be highlighted in Part IV, are keen to contribute to more contemporary, Africanised and urbanised versions of Durban's identity. Part IV thus operates in tandem with Part III in providing both a counterpart and an alternative way of thinking about Durban's identity and urbanity.

4

Stories of Contact, Stories of Space

"Have we started telling our stories yet? The stories of how the great city we live in, came into being. The stories of where all our diverse people come from, and how our cultural and racial groups evolved" (Mayor Obed Mlaba, 2004a:12).

Layers of Space

Durban is a palimpsest space. A superficial first glance at Durban would expose a typical post-apartheid urban landscape with an emphasis on colonial, British aesthetics both in terms of form and history. However, a little wading and sifting indicate an urban landscape flecked with levels of meaning. Layers supercede one another but traces of early forms are always present. Such a phenomenon is visible in both the urban and social fabric of Durban. Despite the hegemony of racial segregation under apartheid, Durban has always been a space of mutual entanglements.

Building on Part II's discussion of the African diver(C)ity, Part III initiates the vital project of reading Durban's identity as a product of its history of social entanglement. The theory related thus far frames the present discussion of Durban's emergent African identity. From a postcolonial perspective, this chapter looks at the historical social relationships and form of Durban and how these, through the advent of colonialism, were substantially reinvented. The chapter considers the context of contact within which Durban evolved. It details the emergent creolising landscape both in terms of the social and urban fabric. Moreover, it attempts to illustrate how the colonial order sought to impose its own values on the creolised space and hide earlier histories. The chapter concludes by highlighting the importance of Durban's creolising foundations for its current attempts at defining its identity, leading to the examinations of the following chapters. Certainly current artistic endeavours seeking to contour Durban's African identity, discussed in Part IV, could profit from the linking of earlier imbrications to their current projects and in many ways are already attempting to do this. However, mainstream marketing of Durban and its identity has instead relied more heavily on colonial versions of the past as will be illustrated in the following two chapters. This certainly needs to be challenged.

Contextualising Durban as a Cultural Site of Creolisation

Challenging perceptions about Durban's urban, cultural past is important not only in terms of telling more politically correct stories. As Bhabha (1994:256) suggests: "we must not merely change the *narratives* of our histories, but transform our sense of what it means to live, to be, in other times and different spaces, both human and historical". It is important for Durbanites to connect to an earlier time-space which delineates a nascent creolisation so that present attempts to invoke a cross-cultural identity are connected to a past and future of possibility.

In popular and academic accounts of Durban, much has been written about the impact of the British in particular (and to a lesser extent, the Afrikaners) on settlement in KwaZulu-Natal. However, little work to date has examined the impact of indigenous peoples on Durban's cultural and physical fabric. Even less research has interrogated the creolising urban form. However, as will be illustrated, the incipient urbanity and society of Durban was mutually constituted. In looking at these imbrications, this chapter begins from the notion that

Post-colonial readings of culture have tended to focus on difference – but more complex studies of affinities and how they are made are now needed, particularly in South Africa. The theoretical possibilities of the term 'creolization' need to be drawn on not to bring about erasure – an erasing of difference – but to underwrite a complex process of making connections (Nuttall & Michael, 2000:10).

Durban provides a rich site from which to explore intricate processes of creolisation and connection. The city is hence a key cultural archive from which to dispel widespread conceptions of Africa (Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004b; Nuttall, 2004). Such a reading aims to illuminate the sense "of the African metropolis as a compositional process that is displaceable and reversible by the act of reading and deciphering" (Mbembe & Nuttall, 2004b:352).¹ In other words, this chapter seeks to unravel commonly held notions of Durban's past and foreground alternative readings. Each city archive has its own historically constituted identity that has naturally undergone numerous permutations over the years. Readings or theorisations of the city in terms of culture must be cognisant of these transformations. Durban's city archive contains multiple iterations. Accordingly, "The city becomes a living archive for the various diasporas of which it is made: here archive is something living, it fuses and transforms, it conjures the

¹ See the debate between Watts (2005) and Mbembe and Nuttall (2005, 2004b) over their readings of the African city.

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new, that is always about the old" (Nuttall & Michael, 2000:22). It has been argued that "the most appropriate or encompassing way of reading a cultural artefact might be through its representation as image" (Nuttall & Michael, 2000:16). Hence, it is necessary to look at how the cultural artefact or archive that is Durban has been represented in terms of its identity. In addition, too often the city itself is ignored. Granted, it is dissected in terms of divisible paradigms: globalisation, polarisation, urbanisation, segregation but the living, breathing city as a whole is sidelined. Indeed, "Far less attention has been paid to its cultural dimensions as *city life and form*" (Nuttall, 2004:740). Indeed, little attention has been given to Durban's city life and form, especially in terms of the stories of how its culture and identity evolved in tandem with the built environment in pre-colonial and colonial times. This imbrication points to a shared, co-constituting identity and urbanity and contends that the current attempts to contour the city, as will be seen in Part IV, are underpinned by a long history of interaction.

Durban's current identity is thus inseparable from its historical context; consequently, it is of considerable value to reflect on the texture and rationale of early urban engagements. There is a rich tradition of scholarship documenting the economic and social history of KwaZulu-Natal.² Of particular interest here is scholarship which seeks to appreciate social interaction and creolisation. In this regard the work of Ballard (1989, 1982, 1981) and to a lesser degree Cubbin (1983) is most useful. It is in this vein that this chapter seeks to carve out a space of cohabitation and creolisation – the space of early Durban. The chapter attempts to suggest that pre-colonial contact between traders and the indigenous locals left an indelible imprint on Durban's cultural fabric. The following narrative seeks to re-construct Durban's physical and cultural fabric in these terms. Underpinning Durban's history and form is the underlying assumption that it was a product of English, colonial imperatives. From the formal colonisation of the Natal³ area in 1844 this may have been increasingly the case. However, prior to this, extensive creolising networks were established which shaded and shaped ways of being both black and white. The purpose of such a discussion is twofold. Firstly, it works against the

² Key texts – by no means approximating a complete list – within this oeuvre include Duminy & Guest (1989a) Guest & Sellers (1985a), Brookes & Webb (1965) and Hattersley (1950).

³ Natal was named by Vasco da Gama in 1497 who sighted the coast on his way to India. The term 'Natal' referred, in colonial times, to the land whose eastern boundary was formed by the Indian Ocean and whose western boundary was provided by the Drakensberg mountains. It was bordered in the north by the Umzinyati (Buffalo) – Tugela Rivers and in the south by the Umzimkulu River. In the south, the boundary was extended in 1866 and Zululand was

simplistic narrative of urban identity representation within the colonial tropes of adventure, wildlife and indigenous culture that will be discussed in the following two chapters. Secondly, it points to a nascent creolisation which has always been a feature of Durban's identity; a point which current artistic attempts at the fashioning of a creolised city identity seek to harness and develop.

"They said his hair was like cattle tails": Meeting Each 'Other'

A vast swath of well documented historical material exists which fully recounts the history of settlement in the space that was to become Durban (for example, see Bjorvig, 1994; Cubbin, 1983; Swanson, 1964). Here, the focus is on the pre-colonial meetings between black and white and the development of an emergent urban and social creolised form.

Before discussing the creolised form in some depth, it is necessary to comment on the sources which this argument draws upon. The 'diaries' of Henry Francis Fynn (1950), Nathaniel Isaacs ([1836] 1937, [1836] 1936) and Captain Allen F. Gardiner ([1836] 1966) provide an accented account of life in Natal in the 1800s. With the exception of Isaacs' (who was Jewish) narrative, these accounts are uniformly from a white, Christian perspective. It must be noted that the integrity of the 'diaries' have been queried and the lives of the protagonists reassessed. Indeed, the researcher must exercise caution when reconstructing Natal's past from these sources. Fynn's (1950) volume in particular has been criticised. Fynn reconstructed his 'diary' at a later date after the original was lost. In addition, his editors had a large influence on the final text. Wylie (2006:7) suggests that the Fynn text is "largely fraudulent". Nevertheless, in Hamilton's (1993:504) opinion, Fynn's 'diary' does offer "a detailed picture of life and events in Shakan times that is remarkable and invaluable to modern historians". Isaacs' ([1836] 1937, [1836] 1936) volumes have also been problematised. Wylie (2006, 2000, 1995, 1991) contends that Isaacs' volumes were ghost-written and contain many blatant falsehoods, gaps and contradictions. However, Hamilton (1998, 1995) remarks that Isaacs was an intelligent, curious and interested observer. She asserts that his text is of considerable historical value and intermittent dramatisations and romanticisms can be easily identified by the discerning reader. Wylie (2006:362) concedes that Isaacs' text is "unavoidable" and not wholly bereft of information of value. Accordingly, these white

incorporated in 1897. In 1903, as a result of the Second Anglo-Boer war, certain northern areas surrounding Utrecht and Vryheid became part of Natal (Guest & Sellers, 1985b).

accounts should be treated with measurable caution and viewed within the context of their various biases, silences and fictions. Often self-serving, the 'diaries' undoubtedly filter events through white eyes (Wylie, 2006, 2000, 1995, 1993, 1991; Hamilton, 1998, 1993; Pridmore, 1996, 1992).

Some insight into the perspectives of the indigenous inhabitants is provided in the private papers of James Stuart which are published in an incomplete series of edited volumes (Webb & Wright, 2001, 1986, 1982, 1979, 1976). His original notes and transcripts are collated in the *Stuart Papers* at the Killie Campbell Africana Library in Durban. Stuart spent his career in the employ of the colonial government working at various times as interpreter, magistrate and administrator. Extremely interested in local history, society and customs, Stuart interviewed almost two hundred informants throughout his career. It is possible to denigrate Stuart's efforts in terms of the obviously mediating effect he had on the oral testimonies that he recorded. However, Hamilton (1998, 1993) argues against a simplistic discarding of Stuart's efforts. Rejecting "crude caricatures" of Stuart which suggest he exploited African oral tradition in order to legitimise and facilitate white access to labour and land, she suggests the Stuart was "a highly self-conscious cross-cultural broker, mediating between the African and European colonial worlds in which he moved" (Hamilton, 1993:478). As such, his collection is of value to researchers.

Both the *Stuart Papers* and the traders' 'diaries' provide a glimpse of pre-colonial activities in KwaZulu-Natal. However, the period covered by these documents by no means marked the first moment of human habitation of the area. On the contrary, archaeological evidence suggests occupation of the area since the Early Stone Age. Indeed, archaeological research has detailed both Stone Age and Iron Age occupation of the greater Durban area and Natal. Such indication dispels the myth that the Nguni peoples' association with the topography was almost contemporaneous to white expansion – the previous, hegemonic theory purporting that as the white settlers moved east from the Cape, the Nguni peoples were descending to the southwest (Mazel, 1989; Maggs, 1989, 1980; Maylam, 1986).

The *Stuart Papers* convey a sense of the settlement that existed prior to the arrival of the traders. Mcotoyi ka Mnini's testimony recounts that "we came to Port Natal, before Tshaka's (sic) day" and documents the social geography and spatial layout (Webb & Wright, 1982:53). The area was host to an intricate social ordering and pattern of settlement. This textured notion of a spatially diverse society prior to the arrival of the

British traders underscores the complexity of social and spatial relationships into which the traders later entered.

The area was well known in shipping and trading circles prior to the 1820s. During this period, the bay was host to a few temporary settlements as well as to various Nguni peoples. The Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC) attempted to 'purchase' the area in 1689 from a local chief, Inyangesi, but their claim was later repudiated by Inyangesi's son (Maggs, 1989; Brookes & Webb, 1965). In addition, small trading vessels frequently visited the bay of Natal. Dutch and English ships were periodically wrecked in the vicinity of Natal, prompting a number of rescue expeditions. One of Stuart's informants, Mahaya Ka Nongqabana, relays the story of his great-grandmother, a white woman, who was shipwrecked South of what is now Durban. Her two companions died. She was found by the local inhabitants and was married off to a wealthy man to whom she bore several children. This occurred, according to Mahaya, prior to the reign of Shaka (Webb & Wright, 1979). The *Stuart Papers* mention the appearance of other whites in the area (Webb & Wright, 1982, 1979). Such reports illustrate that interaction between black and white actually has a much longer integrated and textured history than many sources assert. One must thus view KwaZulu-Natal's history within the context of a series of claims and contacts.

One of the earliest encounters between the British traders and the local people occurred in 1824 and is described by a number of Stuart's informants – not all of whose testimonies coincide but together convey a useful picture of the event (see Webb & Wright, 1986, 1982, 1979, 1976). Getting "the story straight" (Wright, 2001:iv) as Webb and Wright discover is not of principal importance. Here, the importance lies in hearing the different voices giving their perspectives on events traditionally encapsulated in white understandings. Descriptions of the initial meetings are telling and involved shock and amazement on both sides. For example, Dinya ka Zokozwayo observes of one Sinqila who,

found all his women and children running away from the wild beast, viz. a white man [Fynn] who was mounted on a horse...They said his hair was like cattle tails, and the horse some strange bogey...The extraordinary thing to the natives was this strange being on top of another strange animal" (Webb & Wright, 1976:96).

Another testimony also refers to the white traders as "*strange beasts* (Webb & Wright, 1979:266). Sinquila consequently reports the incident to his chief, Magaye, warning him "not to run away on seeing the monster" (Webb & Wright, 1976:96). He describes the

white man's dress, including mention of his strange hat, peculiar bottle and gun. On Fynn's appearance at Magaye's kraal, "All present were moved with wonder and awe, so much so that the regiments shuffled back as far as the fence, whilst Magaye himself moved backwards with such vigour as to sprain <sic> one of the children...behind him" (Webb & Wright, 1976:96). Apparently, the company were made more comfortable after Fynn had dismounted and turned full circle sans hat so that he could be well surveyed. Nevertheless, Magaye's brother "was much concerned at having to receive the monster into his own homestead" (Webb & Wright, 1976:97) for the night.

The indigenous people's response to the white man is delightful in the sense that the traditional lens usually ascribed to the colonial interlocutor is firmly reversed and trained on the 'wild beast' with his 'strange bogey'. The traders use similar words in response to the black Africans, for example, Isaacs' ([1836] 1936:26) denigration of them as "a people in a state of complete barbarism". The mutual use of terms underscores similar reactions in the face of difference and illustrates that whites were viewed with much the same mix of curiosity and contempt as they visited on their black African counterparts.

White versions of contact similarly acknowledge the presence of indigenous people. In his diary, Fynn (1950:55) reproduces an 1826 letter from Lieutenant James Saunders King to Earl Bathurst (the Secretary for War and the Colonies) which reports:

Our first interview with the natives at this place appeared rather hostile on their part, they being armed with their assegai and shield. But when we became better acquainted, they were extremely well disposed and expressed a particular desire for us to remain among them.

Despite initial alarm, the passage hints that after some effort, a relationship was forged between the two groups. While King clearly highlights the presence of the local people (he also cites the "great abundance" [cited in Fynn, 1950:54] of Indian corn being grown in the vicinity of the harbour), the perception was later fostered, in part by the selfsame traders, that the area was devoid of human habitation. Certainly for the later colonists, this notion enabled them to ignore local histories of settlement and easily import their own methods in designing and administrating the urban form.

These perceptions were aided by readings of the traders' 'diaries' and letters. Farewell (Document No. 22, C.O. 211, pp. 650-651 and 656-657, cited in Leverton, 1984:37) describes the territory as "nearly depopulated, not containing more

than three or four hundred inhabitants". Clearly, it was in the interest of Farewell to underrepresent the population in order to encourage annexation. Similarly, Fynn (1950:58) observes that the

bay appeared to be surrounded by bush in every direction; the only spot that was somewhat open was the locality now known as Khangela...[we] strolled about the Khangela flat on the chance of finding some natives...but met with no trace of any inhabitants being in the country.

But, as a footnote, Fynn (1950:60) recounts: "We found at Natal about 60 persons, remnant of a tribe recently destroyed by Shaka, living on the westerly point of the bay in a most distressful and famished condition". Nathaniel Isaacs further filters the area through the colonial tropes of wilderness and barbarism, immediately characterising the place as devoid of an evolved human culture and history. He observes:

Everything indicated a wild and uncivilised country, where nature had been lavish of her bounty, but where the art and industry of man had been little applied in improving her works. The scenery had an appearance of grandeur – there was verdure, and spontaneous vegetation, but cultivation was confined to occasional patches...There was, however, a savage wilderness that could only impress us with foreboding...I had been impressed with a conviction that no humanised being inhabited the coast; when I had imagined that we were cast upon a shore where civilised man had never dared to set his foot! (Isaacs, [1836] 1936:16).

The notion of an empty landscape is created not so much by the fact that there are no people but on account of there being no 'civilised' people. Writings such as these have done much to entrench the idea of an uninhabited, untouched place despite the realities attested to by Stuart's informants.

Contradicting the assumption one might make from reading the traders' 'diaries', this piece of land was one of tremendous social interaction between the local inhabitants and the white traders. There were many similarities between the two groups. As has been shown, both were simultaneously struck by the peculiar appearance of 'the Other'. Both found each other's habits strange. Interchangeably, both groups were viewed by the other as beasts or monsters. Similarly, linguistic exchanges were common. The British anglicised black African names. At the same time, black African names were designated to the very same British men.

Yet, the early British traders were fully aware that their continued presence at the Natal bay was conditional on their acceptance by Shaka since the

British were not interested in annexing the area. Numerous journeys were undertaken to



Figure 4.1: Image of Shaka (Isaacs, [1836] 1936: facing 48)

visit, trade and negotiate with Shaka and later, after his assassination, with Dingane. Wylie (2000) offers a compelling unmasking of both the visual and verbal images of Shaka. While most of this falls beyond the present scope of this thesis, some consideration of the topic is appropriate here due to the importance of images of Shaka in the marketing of contemporary Durban (to be discussed in the following chapters). It is suggested that the famous image of Shaka (reproduced in Figure 4.1) which Isaacs' ([1836] 1936) volume has placed in circulation, probably bears little resemblance to Shaka. The composition of the sketch reflects certain European stylistic conventions. As a monarch, Shaka is made to stand on some sort of promontory – here a rocky outcrop. The body's proportions are exaggerated and the facial features Europeanised. Moreover, the way the subject's "right hand is curled around the spear, in combination with the *contrapposto* pose, had been a staple of exotic and military art since before the Renaissance" (Wylie, 2000:12). Furthermore, Wylie (2000) argues that Shaka is a textual construct – a romance-adventure story. He argues that Shaka exists "most powerfully, for most people, as a literary myth catering for, and popular because of, a palimpsest of acculturated preconceptions" (Wylie, 2000:239). The notion of Shaka as a construct is important. In many ways, Shaka has been mythologised and this continues in present day marketing efforts. Durban's current identity has been entangled in mythical conceptions of Shaka drawn from such accounts of him. Isaacs' volumes provide the core detail of the essentialised, mythic conception of Shaka and his reported violence and savagery (Wylie, 2006, 2000, 1992).

Notwithstanding this, Hamilton (1998) argues that it was not until after his death that

Shaka was viewed in a negative light as a monster. Prior to this, he was viewed by the traders merely as a benign patron.

Hamilton (1998) suggests that perceptions or representations of Shaka were also influenced by indigenous ideas about him. Far from being purely a white, colonial creation, white writings have been shaped by black African discourses and views and vice versa.⁴ Indeed, Wylie (2006) agrees that black and white inventions leak into one another. The representation of Shaka has undergone constant shifts; nevertheless, it has always been an intertwined, co-production. This realisation gives further impetus to the argument that the history of Durban's space was borne out of creolising and mutual social practices and underscores its continued use in the post-apartheid era. Both the traders and the local indigenous society played significant parts in constituting and effecting the emerging imagery of their space and place.

Creolising the Landscape

As mentioned previously, the traders realised that they would have to create the conditions in which they could profitably remain in Natal. In the main, they were motivated by economic ambitions; any political, missionary or military interests were superseded by their trading concerns (Ballard, 1989, 1982, 1981). Wright (1989) has suggested that Shaka welcomed the arrival of traders, hoping their presence would be advantageous politically (he hoped that they would act as intermediaries with the British authorities and he believed they could be a potentially useful military ally). Moreover, Shaka was eager to obtain manufactured goods from the traders (Wright, 1989). In 1824, Shaka 'ceded' land to the British traders. Shaka's grant (Document No. 22, Annexure 1, C.O. 211, pp. 652-655, cited in Leverton, 1984:38-39) reads in part:

I, Inquos Chaka, king of the Zulos and of the country of Natal as well as the whole of the land from Natal to Delagoa Bay which I inherited from my father, Kenyargacarchu, for myself and heirs, do hereby on the seventh day of August in the year of Our Lord eighteen hundred and twenty-four, in the presence of my chiefs of my own free will and in consideration of divers goods received, grant, make over and sell unto F. G. Farewell and Company the entire and full possession in perpetuity to themselves, heirs and executors, of the port or

⁴ Confronted with a similar problem, Atkins (1993) educes a black African viewpoint from the archive of colonial sources. This is achieved via the assumption that these texts unconsciously reveal information that enables one to deduce the black African point of view.

harbour of Natal known by the natives name, Bubulonga, together with the islands therein and surrounding country.

Brookes and Webb (1965) suggest that the two parties had different understandings of what this meant – Shaka, or his successor, Dingane, never really meant to renounce their claim to the land where they allowed the traders to live. Furthermore, Wylie (2006) asserts that some of the land 'granted' fell under the jurisdiction of others. Wylie (2006:319-320) suggests that the land grant was fundamentally fraudulent as it lies "in total opposition to Shaka's understanding of land use". In all probability, Shaka would have agreed to let the traders establish themselves in the bay area and allocated some people to assist in the building of a settlement. Moreover, he would have interacted with them as he would with any other local headman (Wylie, 2006). Indeed, Wright (1989) contends that Shaka was at pains to make clear to the traders that they fell under his authority and their continued presence in the area depended on their obedience.

Ballard (1982:50) argues that by "obtaining permission from Shaka to occupy land and to trade from the port the traders had, in effect, recognized the legitimacy of Zulu rule in Natal". In this manner, the traders had effectively accepted the overlordship of Shaka. Of course, there was no alternative course of action. The reluctance of the British to annex the area dictated that such a relationship must be entered upon in order that the traders could meet their security and trading interests. Shaka viewed the traders as 'client-chiefs'. The trader 'client-chiefs' were expected to supply military and economic services to Shaka as required in much the same manner as other chiefs within Shaka's control. Shaka demanded that the traders participate in several military excursions. The traders acquiesced – Cubbin (1983) contends that this is an excellent example of the traders accepting the authority and hegemony of Shaka. On the other hand, Wright (1989) suggests that the traders were far from unwilling participants as they stood to gain from their involvement. Nevertheless, Wright (1989:334) suggests that the traders may have "in certain ways have sought to resist the terms of domination" and may also have been given extra latitude as 'favourites' of Shaka. Resistance on the part of the traders were kept in check by their dependence on the local peoples for food and material support. Thus, while the traders still maintained an affiliation with Britain and regarded themselves as British, they were quite flexible in adopting other identities in return for trading privileges and security. By accepting a subservient position in relation to Shaka (importantly, a political authority who was non-

white), the traders demonstrated a high degree of adaptation (Wright, 1989; Ballard, 1989, 1982; Cubbin, 1983; Swanson, 1964).

Pre-colonial adaptations between black and white in early Durban have been largely hidden. However, the social space of the nascent settlement was indicative of a whole host of creolising and interactive social practices which transcended the black-white boundary. The traders adapted to both the local environment and customs (Pridmore, 1996). New arrivals in 1825 and 1826 were shocked to find the white inhabitants had adopted the dress of their indigenous counterparts (Pridmore, 1996). Isaacs ([1836] 1936:95) describes Fynn's dress:

His head was partly covered by a crownless straw hat, and a tattered blanket, fastened round his neck by means of strips of hide, served to cover his body, while his hands performed the office of keeping it round his nether man; his shoes he had discarded for some months, while every other habiliment had imperceptibly worn away.

The merging of lifestyles of black and white was also reflected in the emerging settlement. Maziyana ka Mahlabeni recounts that after meeting with Shaka, Farewell returned to where he had landed, "cut down trees and built his establishment and called it Isingyama. The site of it is where the court-house at present stands. Those who had hidden away by ones and twos in the bushes about Port Natal came out of their places of refuge on seeing food available" (Webb & Wright, 1979:266). Importantly, Farewell gave his home an indigenous name. Moreover, the first expression of the joint settlement provided stability for the Nguni refugees.

Isaacs ([1836] 1936) provides another glimpse of this emerging space. This description reveals a large degree of adaptation on behalf of the traders to the living modes and building techniques of the locals:

The place selected by Mr. Farewell for his residence had a singular appearance, from the peculiar construction of the several edifices. His house was not unlike an ordinary barn made of wattle, and plastered with clay, without windows, and with only one door composed of reeds. It had a thatched roof, but otherwise was not remarkable either for the elegance of its structure, or the capacity of its interior. The house of Cane was contiguous to that of Mr. Farewell, and about twenty yards from it, while that of Ogle was at a similar distance, and had the appearance of the roof of a house placed designedly on the ground, the gable end of which being left open served as a door. Opposite Mr. Farewell's house

was a native hut, in the shape of a beehive, about twenty-one feet in circumference, and six feet high, built of small sticks and supported by a pole in the centre. It was thatched with grass, and had an aperture about eighteen inches square, through which the owner crept into his mansion (Isaacs, [1836] 1936:21-22).

Complimenting this description, Fynn (1950) provides a sketch of the traders' homesteads (reproduced in Figure 4.2). It is apparent from both the white and black African accounts (and from the sketch) that the various peoples of pre-colonial Durban were living in close proximity, adapting each other's building techniques and attempting to carve out a mutual existence.



Figure 4.2: Fynn's Sketch of the Homesteads (Fynn, 1950: facing 110)

Cross-fertilisation extended past pragmatic shelter concerns and influenced "the living fabric of society" (Freund, 1990:224). Northern Nguni refugees from Shaka were attracted to the traders' makeshift settlement believing that their livelihoods would be improved and that the traders would protect them. In exchange for protection, the refugees provided the traders with ivory, hides and produce (Ballard, 1989; Lambert, 1989). In short, the refugees constituted a source of labour for the traders (Wright, 1989). Yet, Wright (1989:338) reminds that even "the continued existence and expansion of this source of labour was directly contingent on Shaka's giving permission for individual families to establish themselves at Port Natal, and on his continuing to make the traders presentations of cattle".

Faced with a growing number of refugees, the traders began to organise both the community and the form of settlement in accordance with local politics and custom. Ballard (1982:51) suggests that the "adoption of northern Nguni laws and customs as an alternative to metropolitan codes provides yet another example of the acculturation of white frontiersmen". This assimilation of the local laws and customs were an important feature of the early settlement (Ballard, 1989). Ballard (1989:118) explains that the "refugees were organized by the traders along African political lines, separated into villages acknowledging individual traders as their chiefs". Ballard (1982:51) suggests that the "only alternative to ruling the port by African customary institutions was anarchy, for the traders were too few in number and lacked the materials and manpower to impose a metropolitan system of government on their black wards". Mimicking the client-chief relationship they had with Shaka, the traders re-enacted similar client-chief relationships with regard to the black African refugees. Clearly, multiple political and cultural connections existed in a fluid and flexible manner. Indeed, the refugees regarded the traders as their chiefs and organic villages grew around each trader. Thus, Henry Francis Fynn, Henry Ogle and John Cane presided over three homesteads apiece. King and Farewell presided over similar nuclei. King however died in 1828 and Farewell's wife presided over his establishment. By 1828, the group of traders scattered around the bay of Natal existed predominantly in isolation from each other in their respective homesteads or 'imizi' and were, in the main, motivated by self-interest rather than by any broader goal (Pridmore, 1996; Wright, 1989; Ballard, 1989, 1982).

Brookes and Webb (1965:20) observe that by 1835, "only one dwelling at the Port had the semblance of a European house and this was built of reeds and mud. The homes were all carefully concealed among the bush and approached by narrow and winding avenues". By 1838, the white population had increased to about 40 people and the black African population consisted of roughly 2500 persons. The settlement had expanded with various white men continuing to establish themselves as chiefs over homesteads, often marrying Nguni wives and siring children in the process. According to Hattersley (1950:14-15), "All lived from necessity much as the Bantu lived...Here they governed their 'tribes with the patriarchal authority of Bantu chiefs". That the early traders had relationships with local women and lived as chiefs over indigenous-style settlements was well-known, even to the first generation colonists (see Russell, 1899).

Dinya ka Zokozwayo describes the social and physical forms of the emergent settlement:

All these Europeans built on this plan: they all had a number of wives and ordinary native kraals, but also differently constructed houses not far off, where they actually lived and at which they received European visitors. Wohlo⁵ and Mbulazi⁶ are the two who had the largest number of wives...The sexual intercourse with these wives took place on the Zulu plan; that is, any woman required would be specifically sent for. She would at nightfall come to the man's house. The man would not go about to each woman's hut from time to time, carrying his blanket with him, as less important men are in the habit of doing (Webb & Wright, 1976:111).

Ballard (1982:52) argues that the "prevalence of cohabitation among the white chiefs and their black female clients reflects not only the scarcity of white women but the degree of integration that occurred in this frontier society". Dinya ka Zokozwayo's statement reveals that traders were respected by their black African wards and that to some extent, many of the traders adhered to the marriage customs of the northern Nguni. Lobola (a bride's dowry in cattle) was paid by several of the traders in order to legitimise their marriages (Ballard, 1989, 1982). In addition, the siting of wives' hut around the traders' homes was indicative of local marriage customs and the dominant settlement pattern of the northern Nguni chiefs (Ballard, 1989, 1982). Whether interacting sexually or not – some, like Collis and Gardiner, did not take local wives – all became client-chiefs in early Durban's political climate. As Dinya attests: "Many came and settled under the various Europeans, including Gardiner" (Webb & Wright, 1976:112). Irrespective of whether they were sexual or not, these relationships had an impact on the identity of the early settlement and its inhabitants. At some level, one must look at the beyond the natural tendency to view these black-white relationships in terms of sexual dominance of white over black. Several traders sought to legitimise their relationships and indeed were vocal about ensuring that their children received that their rightful inheritance (Ballard, 1982).

Into this interactive space, a whole generation of children were born. Their fathers were white; their mothers black. This fact is not acknowledged in the white traders' 'diaries' but is clearly evident in the *Stuart Papers*. Maziyana ka Mahlabeni states that "Some of the Europeans...remained and intermarried with natives, and their children married natives" (Webb & Wright, 1979:269). Ndongeni ka Xoki, the rider who

⁵ Henry Ogle

⁶ Henry Francis Fynn

accompanied Dick King to Grahamstown, observes that at one time King "had native wives and a native kraal" (Webb & Wright, 1986:239). Dinya corroborates this (Webb & Wright, 1976). However, "he subsequently cast aside his native wives and married an English girl" (Webb & Wright, 1986:240). In fact, Eric Apelgren, the current Head of International and Governance Relations for the eThekweni Municipality is a fourth generation descendent of Dick King (Apelgren Interview, 2003). Apelgren (Interview, 2003) observes that he has little respect for his ancestor due to his affairs with numerous black African women for which he failed to take responsibility. John Cane also fathered children with local women as his son, Christian alias Lavuta, testifies (Webb & Wright, 1976). Likewise, Fynn had several children with black African women (Webb & Wright, 2001). Many of the descendants of these unions still live in Durban and are reminders of a creolising, common history that has been obscured (see later in this chapter).

Ballard (1982) is quick to point out that while the white traders were adapting to Nguni customs and appropriating some of their values, a similar process was occurring with regard to the Nguni refugees. The refugees had lost their cattle (formerly the principal source of status and wealth) and, encouraged by the traders, concentrated their efforts on fishing, hunting and particularly agriculture. Soon a profitable relationship was established whereby the Nguni agriculturists would supply the traders with food. The traders were quite happy with this arrangement as it was more profitable for them to be engaged in trade rather than agriculture. Furthermore, it meant that food could be sourced more cheaply instead of relying on imports from the Cape. Ballard (1982:54) suggests that in the first eleven years following the arrival of Farewell and Fynn, "a minor agricultural revolution had taken place within the social system of northern Nguni agriculture". Another economic adaptation included the participation of the refugees in hunting; thus, the Nguni became increasingly familiar with the use of firearms. Wright (1989) suggests that in the face of internal dissension, the traders' adherents were taught this skill in case of disagreement over trading issues or in the event of conflict with Shaka or Dingane. Importantly, those living under 'Zulu' leadership were less influenced by the white traders than their Nguni counterparts. Part of the reason for this was that white-Zulu interaction was heavily mediated by Shaka and later by Dingane (Ballard, 1989, 1982).

One must also be wary of painting too rosy a picture of creolisation. By no means can it be suggested that the patriarchal client-chief relationships with the local people were unproblematic examples of interaction. Indeed they were not. Wylie

(2006:7) suggests that the traders were “thoroughly disreputable,” charging them with raiding, gun running and mercenary activities. Wylie (2006, 2000, 1995, 1992, 1991) also insinuates that the traders were involved in slave trading – a contention which is circumstantial, but in his opinion, strong. Fynn, in particular, slotted easily “into the violence characteristic of an intensely racist frontier situation, in which the manipulation and murder of Africans passed as routine” (Wylie, 2000:112, 1995:416). Fynn, according to Wylie (2000, 1995), was racist and operated within a pattern of paternalistic violence in his relationships with black Africans. Moreover, Wylie (2006, 1995) has a rather negative and cynical perception of the interactions which did take place. He contends: “In Natal, Fynn ‘went native,’ fathered several known children of Zulu ‘wives’, and generally joined the pattern, not only of local ‘petty warfare,’ but of the established European plunder systems” (Wylie, 1995:416). Elsewhere, he comments that the traders “acquired harems of local wives and spawned numerous children whom they subsequently abandoned” (Wylie, 2006:7).

Certainly the traders’ adaptation to local conditions and way of life was motivated by self-interest and convenience. For example, when offered a post as interpreter in the Cape Colony, Fynn deserted his assimilative identity and re-entered the colonial society of the Cape. In the process, he abandoned his black African wife, other black African women who lived with him and his children. In 1837, Fynn married a white woman and completed his re-entry into the colonial context. He later returned to Natal with his second, white wife and young son in order to take up a magisterial post in post-annexation colonial Natal. Fynn and his second wife appear to have had some contact with the offspring of his earlier liaisons although Fynn did not exert much paternal influence, leaving their upbringing to their mothers (Bramdeow, 1988).

Even though the traders could and did move quite freely between the colonial world and their new circumstances in Natal, the impact of the creolisations formed remained. Indeed, Fynn left his Natal families under the care of his brother who remained in Natal and the children became a symbol of the existence of such creolising practices. Whatever the reality, violence, paternalism or peaceful cohabitation, accusations such as those of Wylie discussed above do not negate nascent levels of creolisation which did exist. Whether for reasons of convenience, necessity, protection or circumstance, some surprising relationships and border crossings occurred. The white traders appeared to be quite at ease with adopting a politically subservient role to Shaka while simultaneously modelling their lives on indigenous plans. Durban’s beginnings

were thus marked, not by the immediate imposition of metropolitan and colonial authority but by a measure of acceptance of pre-existing social, political and spatial organisation.

Of course, the situation in Natal was not entirely unique. Certainly, there is long but complicated history of intermingling, interaction and creolisation in Cape Town (Worden, van Heyningen & Bickford-Smith, 1998; Bickford-Smith, 1995). However, rather than accommodating and adapting to the indigenous way of life, which the traders in Natal did, the Dutch – in their settlement of the Cape – consigned Africa to the space beyond that created by their physical and mental boundaries. Thus, the situation in Natal can be seen as relatively unique within the South African context. Africa was always a part of the emergent settlement. Rather than working against Africa and imposing European values and imperatives, the traders operated within the local cultural frameworks and achieved their aims largely within a context of co-operation and cohabitation.

Durban's pre-colonial history of interaction and adaptation has not been ignored or hidden but its influence has certainly been obscured. Current mainstream attempts at marketing Durban draw not on the fluid possibilities of identity which have their origin at that time but rather seek to reinvigorate partial, stunted colonial stereotypes as will be illustrated in the following two chapters. This is most disappointing given the rich cultural and physical heritage which Durbanites are able to draw upon in their reconfigurations of their post-apartheid identities. Before considering this more directly, the argument turns to an examination of how colonialism concealed Durban's creolising heritage through the transition of the area from a settlement to a town.

From Settlement to Town: Colonial Obscuring

Implicit in the theoretical concerns of this thesis is the notion that culture and identity operate in tandem with urban evolution. This chapter has already traced the emergence of a creolised identity in relation to Durban's pre-colonial settlement. However, it is necessary to highlight the transition of this pre-colonial settlement to that of a colonial town, in the process illustrating how colonialism masked many of the creolised underpinnings.

Prior to the 1830s there is little sense that any permanent notion of community with governmental control was desired by the area's inhabitants. Indeed, the initial intention was to form a small camp on shore that would closely interact with a vessel constantly anchored in the port. While Farewell later indicated some desire that

the territory be annexed so that the settlement could be expanded, his efforts were treated with indifference by the colonial authorities (Cubbin, 1983; Swanson, 1964).

By 1830, the concept of settlement turned to that of a town and the formation of a civic community. According to Isaacs ([1836] 1937), the site for a town at Port Natal, long-discussed, was fixed in 1830. Isaacs ([1836] 1937:90) observes that a town was required so that "we might have all our natives congregated within it, both for their comfort and for general defence against predatory tribes, as well as for political purposes". The implication of this was that efforts to establish a town were predicated not only in accordance with the traders' desires but also to accommodate the necessary features and requirements of the burgeoning creolising settlement. This was the first of a series of abortive efforts in the siting of a town (Cubbin, 1983).

It was not until June 1835 that any more progress was made on this score. Gardiner, a missionary, was opposed to the perceived immorality and organisation of the early settlement. He observed that the "settlers live in the most disgraceful way, and very much as the natives do" (cited in Cubbin, 1983:104). Therefore, he tried to push for a town modelled and structured in accordance to 'European' planning imperatives. One can view this in terms of trying to bring 'order' to, and 'civilise' the 'disorder' which Gardiner perceived existing around him. Accordingly, Gardiner ([1836] 1966) documents the impromptu beginnings of the town. He describes the carnivalesque spirit in which "the town of D'Urban was named – its situation fixed – the township and church lands appropriated – and, in short, as much real business gone through as would have required at least a fortnight's hard writing and debating in any other quarter of the globe" (Gardiner, [1836] 1966:188). The town was named in honour of Benjamin D'Urban, the British Governor of the Cape Colony, a man who has been described as ruthless and "racist in outlook and action" (Maylam, 2001:74). This was assuredly a political move designed to encourage D'Urban's support of the annexation of Natal.

Documents relating to the regulations of the new town, a petition for the town to become a British colony and the erection of a church at D'Urban are reproduced in Gardiner's ([1836] 1966:399-404) diary. A plan of the new town was also drawn up (see Figure 4.3). In this schema, no permanent black African settlement was to be allowed but temporary accommodation for black African labourers was permitted provided that a setback one hundred feet from the road was observed. Racial restrictions were thus a feature from the earliest town dictates. This petition was not immediately

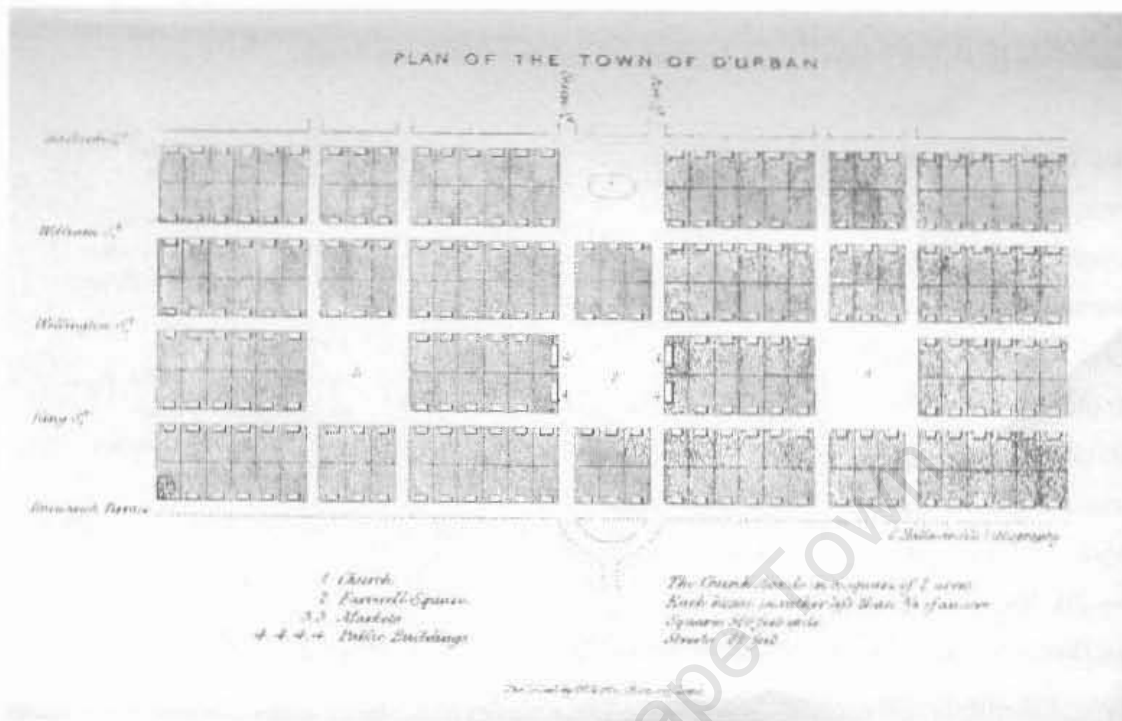


Figure 4.3: Plan of the Town of D'Urban, 1835 (Gardiner, [1836] 1966: following iv)

met with great interest by the British authorities and Cubbin (1983) contends that the town's site was not the site of Durban's present location. Moreover, none of the plans were implemented and life proceeded with little alteration. Indeed, until the 1840s, D'Urban was little more than a trading post which existed independently of government or formal, colonial society. The inhabitants of the post were satisfied with the arrangements of their settlement and were not eager to suffer the restrictions and regulations of a colonial-style local government. Nevertheless, the move to establish a town was significant in that it indicated a growing sense of community, marked the first move towards local self-government and gave the settlement a name which has remained until the present (Brookes & Webb, 1965; Swanson, 1964).

In 1837, the political dynamics shifted when the Voortrekkers arrived in Natal. Their arrival eventually prompted the British to secure their interests and annex Natal. The area was temporarily occupied by the British from December 1838 – December 1839 (ostensibly to restore the peace) and reoccupation was effected in 1842. Natal was proclaimed a colony in 1843 and formally annexed in 1844 (Ballard, 1989, Cubbin, 1983, Swanson, 1964). Annexation marked the beginning of the formal

influence of colonialism in KwaZulu-Natal. From 1843, the social and political structure of Natal was reordered along permanent colonial lines (Ballard, 1982).

During their brief control of the area, the Voortrekkers sought to more firmly entrench the idea of community and in 1840, employed George Christopher Cato (an Englishman who had ingratiated himself with the Voortrekkers) to lay out Durban's plan. The plan, reproduced by Russell (1899) from Cato's draft pencil sketch, can be seen in Figure 4.4. Cato chose the site of Farewell's original encampment (Bjorvig, 1994). His plan was dictated by geography and function and formulated along a grid system with three long streets peppered



Figure 4.4: Reproduction of Cato's 1840 Plan of Durban (Russell, 1899: facing 60)

with cross streets at suitable distances. The town's axis ran along an east-west line and contained a central market square. The town was rectangular in shape and was situated parallel to the line of the bay. The town's plan reflects the importation of colonial notions of planning. Indigenous society was not considered. Instead of drawing on the indigenous models already available, the plan sought to bring the space under control in familiar colonial formats. However, while little was to be achieved for the next ten years -- the seesaw of occupation rendered difficult the building of the town -- Cato's model

eventually served to determine spatially Durban's current reality and earlier forms were largely forgotten both in the physical and mental memory (Swanson, 1964).

Marketing efforts such as those discussed in the following two chapters exist owing to the fact that Durban's creolised origins, have, to a large extent, been reinvented. The advent of formal colonialism required the reinvention of tradition. Processes of colonialism, industrialisation and the settling of the racial form thus reconfigured Durban's life and fabric. Trade and economic imperatives formed the impetus which pushed Durban's development into a fledgling town. Emigration schemes from Britain were encouraged in order to develop a settlement, the economy and 'civilise' the indigenous peoples (Swanson, 1964). The "post-frontier settler displayed a racial and cultural chauvinism that had never been prevalent among the early Port traders" (Ballard, 1985:35). The colonists were of the opinion that the local black African population's cultural development was in a state of infancy and savagery and that it was their responsibility to ensure their 'childlike' charges became 'civilised' (Ballard, 1989, 1985). The colonists also saw black Africans as a cheap source of labour. Indeed, there was much intolerance of those who had 'deviated' from accepted cultural norms (Ballard, 1985). Most of the pre-colonial traders abandoned their wives and homesteads and married white women.

Settler colonialism thus formed an important junction from pre-colonial times. Of course, there had been various previous missionary attempts but the shift in emphasis from a creolising settlement to one in which 'order' was to be brought to the 'uncivilised' is profound. Early creolisations were effectively concealed. Much of our popular knowledge of Durban's history has filtered out this pre-colonial past. In fact, as will be discussed in the following chapters, Durban's current mainstream tourism campaign and urban development are marked by colonial tropes which draw their influence – not from the creolising origins of Durban which could yield fruitful marketing points – but from the attitudes and opinions implicit and complicit with a post-annexation colonial mentality.

It is of value to briefly capture the sentiments of the colonists in order to juxtapose their experience against that of the traders. Such an opposition highlights the manner in which the creolising origins of Durban were disguised and the settlement reinvented and developed along colonial lines. Early Durban, according to the colonists, was at times breathtakingly beautiful and at others, harsh and difficult. Overall, however, difficulties were largely glossed over in favour of romantic nostalgia.

In the second half of the nineteenth century Natal was, to the British, an empty canvas riddled with colonial dreams. Indeed, "Port Natal, South Africa, at that time [had] only just become a portion of the [British] Queen's dominions, and scarcely known, except as a land where half-crowns would buy broad acres, and 'where a perpetual summer reigned throughout the entire year'" (Mason, [1855] 1968:6). While immigrants arrived from a variety of different places, the dominant immigration scheme was British (Russell, 1899). Between 1849 and 1852 approximately five thousand British immigrants arrived (Ballard, 1989). Russell (1899:81) observes that 1850 was sometimes referred to as "The year one". This is significant for it illustrates the mentality of the colonial period. The immigrants behaved as if they were the first occupants of Natal. They 'settled' the land. In this way, it is easy to see how past histories of the indigenous people and the more recent creolising past were easily forgotten. In the imperial imagination, the colonist was confident of his own importance and his position in the landscape. 'Year one' implied nothing had happened before. 'Year one' implied that new histories and legacies could be fabricated. It also explains the framework within which the town operated. Accordingly, Russell (1899:220) wrote of the 1855 burgesses:

The temper of the Burgesses was bellicose, self-assertive, and contentious...their aspirations were yet to be realised, so they hotly contended for principles, wages and rights that should descend to the town and their children, and ensure to themselves a properly constituted Paradise.

'Year one' severed the historical past from the present and all subsequent imaginations of the past, including Russell's, were re-filtered and re-imagined through the colonial eye as an unoccupied paradisaal, but adventure-filled, landscape. One immigrant, Mason ([1855] 1968:66), describes his first view of Durban as a picture "more like the vision of some 'fairy dream' than a delightful reality". He adds:

Add to the picture also a thriving seaport town (Durban), reposing at the foot of this slope, under the shade of the dense bush; and fancy a cloud of pleasure boats, with their tiny sails, skimming the polished surface of this vast mirror, hiding themselves amongst floating islands and romantic creeks. Yes! Fancy this lovely picture lying in silent grandeur beneath a spotless canopy, and the brilliant sun of Southern Africa, and yet the conception, however vivid, will far – very far – fall short of the surpassing reality of that enchanting spot (Mason, [1855] 1968:67-68).

The idea of Durban as an empty landscape and space of opportunity thus spurred the colonial imagination. Moreover, the idea of Durban as a paradise began to take hold through writings such as these.

The immigration schemes transformed Durban from a trading post to a town. By 1845 Durban had hardly changed but the presence of the British immigrants from the late 1840s onwards stimulated the beginnings of an urban economy and institutionalised urban life began to take shape. Governor Maitland approved the pre-existing town structure, plan and title deeds at D'Urban (Russell, 1899). The settlement developed in accordance with Cato's original plan and he later became Durban's first mayor. Cato's plan was elaborated on in 1845 and an official plan of Durban composed (The General Plan of the Town of Durban Situate in the Territory of Natal – see Figure

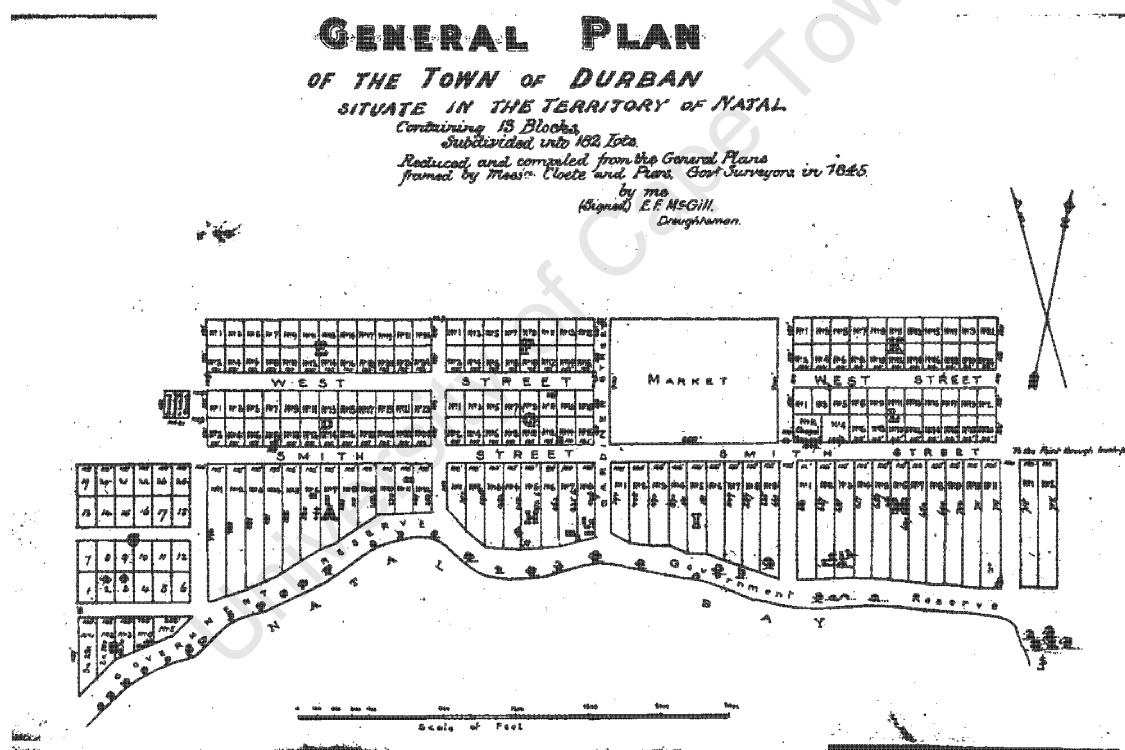


Figure 4.5: General Plan of the Town of Durban, 1845 (Russell, 1899: facing 63)

4.5). Durban's position as an urban centre was thus made official. Moreover, a survey of Durban (see Figure 4.6) was conducted in August 1846 by Government Surveyor Thomas Okes and the town's spatial and physical layout fixed (Bjorvig, 1994). As Carter (1987:118) has emphasised, mapping and surveying are tools of "cultural conquest, not scientific observation". Indeed, surveying and mapping are colonial cultural forms and creates specifically European landscaping. In terms of the spatial technologies of Empire

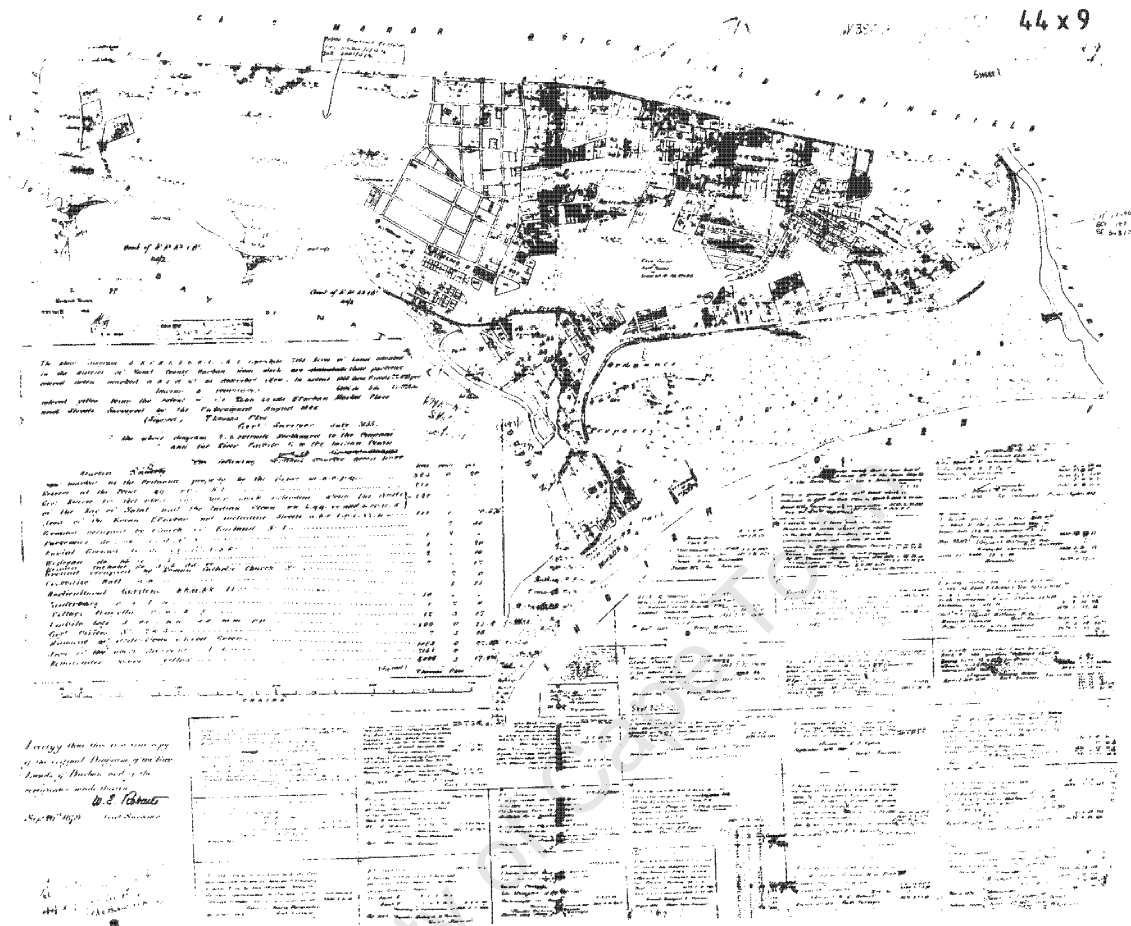


Figure 4.6: True Copy of the Original 1846 Diagram of the Town Lands of Durban, undersigned by Thomas Okes, 1855 and endorsed by W. Roberts, 1879 (Surveyor-General, Pietermaritzburg).

or indeed, ways of appropriating space, there is a trajectory which starts with exploring and mapping, then naming and finally surveying. Through a range of spatial technologies, the British were also to gain power and control. Maps create new realities and indeed are agents of power. Harley (1988) has pointed out that maps are socially constructed and in the context of colonialism, legitimised the reality of Empire and conquest. Both Gardiner and later Cato aimed to map in order to claim space and control the area. By choosing to honour D'Urban in the choice of the name, the colonists sought to obliterate past geographies. Indeed, the area already had an indigenous name – eThekweni. Finally, surveying leads to direct settlement and colonisation. In fact, a few short years after the town was surveyed, mass British immigration began and precipitated the growth of the town.

Bjorvig (1994) remarks that the town's plan was typically British. In contrast to the Dutch settlements in the Cape which were dominated by a central church

and church plain, the Durban settlement was organised around a market square which was a common feature of British influenced towns. Another difference between the Dutch and English planning of towns is that while the Dutch used an ad-hoc approach to planning as the town expanded, the English “established, at least on paper, substantial and complete towns” (Bjorvig, 1994:119). From 1850, attempts at creating a municipality and system of local government in Durban began in earnest but were hindered by concerns about costs (Russell, 1899). In part, the requirement of a municipal authority stemmed from the colonists’ need to settle the racial form. In 1854 local government was established and the borough of Durban proclaimed under the Natal Municipal Ordinance (No. 1) (Swanson, 1964).

Hattersley (1950) observes that the most substantial structure in 1849 was a five-roomed brick house which had a slate roof. While wood and iron structures also existed, the most common structures were wattle and daub, single story dwellings. These dwellings had thatched roofs, were generally whitewashed and had verandas. No formal roads had been constructed at this stage. Drifting sand was a constant problem and after rain parts of the dirt streets would become impassable swamps (Hattersley, 1950; Russell, 1899; Mason [1855] 1968). From the 1850s onwards, wattle and daub structures began to give way to more formal, permanent buildings made from brick, iron and wood as the small population began to re-house itself (Brookes & Webb, 1965; Hattersley, 1950). Mason ([1855] 1968:91-92) observes that:

the town – though really possessing many good houses, and numbers of large mercantile establishments – appeared like a confused mass of dwellings, pitched about indiscriminately, – here an extensive store, brick and slated, with plate glass front, and costly stock of goods; and close by a miserable thatched cottage, built of abominable ‘wattle and daub’. There, too, would be pretty villas, standing in well cultivated gardens, abounding with oranges and lemons, pine apples, bananas, coffee, cotton...and all round these lovely gardens, would be public houses, retail shops, Caffre (sic) huts, inhabited by filthy Hottentots (sic), pigsties, and what else I know not.

Despite the reported chaos, there appears to be a direct contrast between the living quarters and structures of black and white, marking the increasing separation of their lives.

As Durban began to develop, it began displaying typically late nineteenth and early twentieth century British features such as banks, general stores and hotels.

Bjorvig (1994) contends that the development of colonial Durban was dictated by the British settlers' value-systems and thus attempted to demonstrate a 'civilised' appearance. Indeed, the colonists attempted to recreate the society they had left at 'home' (Ballard, 1989). The emerging architecture "superimposed on the streetscape a distinctively British colonial style" (Bjorvig, 1994:126). Moreover, the naming of streets after colonial personages and the British royal family further imparted a British 'spirit' on the town. The physical, spatial, institutional, cultural and urban environment was designed to portray the new social order. Schools, libraries, clubs, societies, shows, racing facilities, botanical gardens and newspapers culturally demarcated the space as British. Today, much of the physical appearance (including its streets, architecture and layout) and cultural sense of Durban still bears traces of its British roots. The underlying values of the British settlers were reflected in the built environment they created which attempted to mirror towns 'back home'. Combining these values with technology enabled the development of a city in accordance with the spirit of the industrial revolution and capitalism (Bjorvig, 1994).

While the organic indigenous structures and forms were largely eclipsed by the formal British plans, it took some time for them to be eradicated completely. In 1865 Holliday ([1890] 1988:19) describes the town as being "about a mile and a quarter long, and half a mile wide". Its

streets are at right angles and about 80 feet broad. There are about 3,000 white inhabitants living in 700 houses. Some of the buildings are very large and handsomely constructed, plate-glass fronts, etc., etc. Others consist of the primitive wattle and daub (sticks stuck in the ground, and mud and cow-dung thrown at them), with thatched roofs (Holliday, [1890] 1988:19).

Despite the eventual eradication of wattle and daub, the urban form never truly managed to fully encompass a British colonial image. The influence of black Africans and Indians⁷ on the built environment can not be ignored. Barracks were constructed around town for indentured Indians and black African labour. Many Indians settled at the Point which

⁷ Little has been said about Indians. This is not to deny the large impact that Indians had economically, socially and culturally on Durban space. The first group of Indians arrived in 1860 as indentured labourers mainly employed in the sugar industry. Many elected to stay after completing their indentures and were prolific in the fresh produce and fish industries. Their number was significantly increased in the mid-1870s with the arrival of free, 'passenger'-class Indians who immersed themselves in trading activities. In fact, few sectors of the colonial economy were affected by the presence of Indians (Pillay, 2002; Freund, 1995; Bhana, 1985; Brain, 1989, 1985).

became a space of interaction. Under the pretext of slum clearance, the Indian community was relocated from the Point in the 1930s. Most visibly, however, Durban's spatial and urban physicalities were "moulded by a white settler elite [and] gave a distinctive imprint to the colonial urban environment" (Bjorvig, 1994:136).

By the late 1800s, the colonial form thus seems to have hidden most of the past creolised forms and structures. The Victorian writer Anthony Trollope, visiting Durban in 1877, observes that Durban "is a pleasant town, clean, attractive and with beautiful scenery near it" (Trollope, 1938:101). In 1896, the American writer, Mark Twain ([1917] 1959) visited Durban as part of his world tour. In his diary, Twain (cited in Ryan, 1999:30) pronounces that "Durban is a neat and clean town. One notices this without having his attention called to it". Twain (cited Ryan, 1999) briefly elaborates on the status of black Africans in the town. At that time, black Africans outnumbered the white settlers by ten to one and were not permitted out without a pass after the curfew bell. By Twain's visit, the colonial town, with its racial divisions, had been settled. Early forms of social integration and cohabitation were consequently obscured. The settlement and its virtues were seen as the preserve of the whites. Any notion of co-creolising, mutually beneficial activities seems to have disappeared.

It is apposite to question the perspectives of the black African residents of Durban, often alluded to but seldom given a voice. One of the earliest recorded, written, black African accounts of the greater Durban area is that provided by an anonymous girl attending the Inanda Seminary⁸ in 1884. The essay has never been published. It, along with other pupils' essays, were copied into a slim volume and presented to the principal of the seminary at Christmas. The girl's conflicted views about the colonial settlers display a unique feminine voice and exhibits her tortured ambivalence with regards to the value of white settlement. In the interests of listening to this engaging, perceptive voice, the essay, in its entirety, is reproduced in Box 4.1 below.

Box 4.1: English in Natal

Many years ago this land of South Africa was a quiet land, as I imagine, but it was not so very quiet for some time. The people had wars among themselves.

There were no white men, no Dutch men, no Coolies, only the abantu⁹ and there (sic) wars were often not so much to avenge evils, as to gain honour and to take much property.

⁸ First school for black African girls.

⁹ People.

The king who strongest was best. They had no school for their children, nor for themselves, no one knew, no one cared how to read. They had no churches in which to gather on Sunday, for they knew nothing about our religion – The[y] knew that there was an Unkulunkulu¹⁰ as every body believes even now tho' the white people are here.

They had no blankets to covers themselves, no bed to sleep on, no flour for bread, no tea, no coffee, no sugar, no whiskey, no brandy, no rum, no wine, they had only native foods, such as mealies¹¹, Amadumbi¹², Imbondi¹³, Izindlubi¹⁴, potatoes, amaduta¹⁵, and etc.

They had no iron pots or dishes to cook with, they had only clay dishes for cooking purposes. They had spoons made of wood, & knives of horn and bone – Bows & arrows, and assegies in the place of guns with powder. Their wants were very few and easily supplied and they were not troubled about what they should do with their money for they had none.

Their children could play in the sunshine and dirt till they were satisfied, with no one to tell them not to soil their clothes, or to trouble them by calling them in to school, in this way the abantu lived till 1498 when the Portuguese came sailing to the Bay on Xmas day and named it Port Natal. In 1822 white people came to trade, and they have never gone away again.

Shaka was then and afterwards him his brother Dingane, while Dingane was king, the Dutch came in from the Cape Colony, and gained possession of the Country, and after Dingane's death, the abantu made Umpande king. He was the last king of the Zulus in Natal.

In 1842 – the English soldiers came and drove out the Dutch and from that time till now they have been our kings and ?, our grand parents. Remember these things, and relate them to us because we like to hear them –

We often wonder if the English and the Dutch did right to take the country away from us. I don't know whether they did right to come here or not. It was right to help us to be better, and it was not right to take our land, from us, & give us nothing but English government and taxes. I think they did right a little but much more wrong.

They have also brought many things that trouble us. They make us pay taxes for our own houses. We don't stay in their houses – They do not make our houses for us, either. They give us a little piece of land, and we stay on it and never go on to what they call theirs, and yet they make us pay taxes. I think that they see that the Abantu are getting wiser and richer, and so make them pay taxes just for their jealousy – I would let the English pay their own taxes if I were a king, for I do not see how the land belongs to them that they can call it theirs, but I do not think that the missionaries did wrong to come among us, for they came to tell us about the word of God, and they do not want our land, but they have brought the white people, and the white people trouble us, and take all our best land, so that if man (sic) from the North Pole should come here, they would say that this land is the land of white people – Just look Durban, Maritzburg, Pinetown, Verulam (sic), are just full of white people – I don't blame the missionaries because they bring us the word of God, and clothe us, and teach us how to lead and study. Look the Umvoti, Inaanda, Amamzintoti, and other stations are almost full of Christian people, and some of the outside kraals have now got teachers, to teach them to read, and about the word of God.

Around Inaanda are gwilis? Lewises? – Mzingamas?, ? mafuzis?, and ambungas? schools, and some few Christians among them now, but by & bye, they will be like the other Christian stations. At first they did not have any of these institutions, we did not know Sunday from any other day, we worked every day alike. But I do not suppose that God did not blame us much before the missionaries came, but now but now (sic) that they come, and told us better, woe to us, if we do not keep the 7th commandment, and all the rest –

The missionaries help us sometimes to keep our land and houses. On one of our vacations when our missionary was away, a coolie came and tried to get a place for a garden here. We told him to wait till the missionary came, and when the missionary came he drove him away.

The coolie and white man both would take our land if they could for their own, and put up stores, and raise sugar cane, and whiskey – They say they will do it, as soon as they can –

Again, on our last vacation many white people came down to our waterfall, and made a camp, and were expecting to stay some time, but our missionary went and talked with them, and in a little while they went away.

He was not willing that they should stay, for they asked no permission, and had no business there – many white people have been here for a place to build near the waterfall, but they are hindered by our missionary, and if it were not for them, the white people would have driven us away long ago. I think the people had been happier, if the land belonged to them, but then they would have fight (sic) many battles with themselves and they would never have had any schools, nor books, nor papers, nor railways, and many other things, and perhaps we shall live just as long as if they had not come. I think the state of things from now on will be far different from the past – the time will come when

¹⁰ G-d.

¹¹ Corn.

¹² "Edible tuber, *Colocasia antiquorum*" (Doke & Vilakazi, 1948:173).

¹³ "Food or beer sent by an affianced girl to her finance's kraal as a gift of goodwill" (Doke & Vilakazi, 1948:84).

¹⁴ "Species of underground nut, *Voandzeia subterranea*" (Doke & Vilakazi, 1948:161).

¹⁵ "Zulu potato, *Coleus dysentericus*" (Doke & Vilakazi, 1948:140).

their (sic) will be no difference between a black man, and a white man, only perhaps in colour and language – some few people have already left native ? and turned white man – although this few are as black as ever, and their hearts are as black as their faces. It makes them very proud and they say they are not under any but the magistrate. They don't like to be called kaffirs, but by & bye when the people have learnt to read the papers, and understand the laws, then they will want to become citizens, and will want to elect their officers, just as the whites do now, so that in years to come, we may have a Zulu for our magistrate, with all his officers of the same kind – We have Zulu preachers now, and why should we not have Zulu lawyers as well. Their (sic) will come Zulu newspapers, and Zulu history – When I think of all these things, it makes me feel just as if I had been born 100 years too soon and that the good times are coming after my time is gone.

(Inanda Seminary Papers, Killie Campbell Collections)

This girl's account is most interesting. She seriously evaluates the benefits of white settlement. She displays anger over the English appropriation of land, paying taxes and the lack of black African agency. These sentiments indicate how far relationships have progressed since Durban's co-creolising origins. The girl feels completely isolated from white people. She merely lists all the items that have been gained from white people, ranging from blankets to pots to churches to books to railways. This is not a two-way process. Nothing is said of how black African people have contributed to the emergent society. Effectively, earlier creolising tendencies have been eroded and obscured.

However, traces of Durban's co-constituting origins were never completely obliterated as evidenced by Russell's (1899) comments which are unpacked here. In a celebratory tone, Russell (1899) concludes his reminiscences and summarises the economic development of Durban between 1850-1860 never deviating from a typically colonial outlook. He commends,

the first Emigrant Burgesses, the real founders of this truly British, colonial town...[for] constituting the...most important and progressive seaport town of South Africa...Looking back across the short space, within the memory of living men, when Durban was the shelter of wild beasts and birds, the hunter and the savage, who shall predict in this electrically driven age the possibilities of its future development (Russell, 1899:510-511).

However, Russell (1899:511) immediately cautions:

May the time never come when the old British stock shall have yielded to climatic influences and lowered itself to an equality with the civilised 'coloured citizen' – native or alien – within our borders, and by affinity engendered a whitey-brown people, subjects of some greater Britain, speaking the language of Volapuk, and ruling the destinies of this borough.

Russell's comment is extremely interesting given what he knew about the interactions between black and white in pre-colonial Natal. On the one hand, one can read this passage as the wording of a British colonist intent on maintaining his dominance and position in society. On the other hand, it illuminates a fear that these border crossings would occur and indeed perhaps that they were in fact occurring at that time. Indeed, they had occurred in the past and certainly the descendants of the traders were present as reminders of these earlier creolisations. Robinson (2004b, 2003b, 2002b, 1998b) suggests that border crossings are always present and that the researcher should look for them. Creolisations were a feature of Durban's earliest days and have left traces in and on Durban's social and cultural fabric.

Certainly, the creolisations of the pre-colonial period have left an important legacy in Durban and beyond. Bramdeow (1988) has examined the history of the Fynn community in KwaZulu-Natal. Many of Fynn's descendants live on KwaZulu-Natal's South Coast and a substantial number of his descendants live in Durban – many in Wentworth (a formally apartheid designated coloured area). Fynn's descendants married into different racial groupings, creating a Fynn community that spans racial classifications. Most of Fynn's descendants however were classified under the apartheid regime as coloured. The Fynn community's position in the colonial and apartheid society was often precarious; for many Fynns, their aspirations were particularly limited by their occupation of an interstice space being neither black nor white. The interests of such a diverse community have naturally not always been harmonious.

The example of the Fynn community is not unique. The Dunn experience also indicates the far-reaching effects of early creolisations. Robert Dunn arrived at Port Natal in 1834 and established himself as a chief of several hundred black African and coloured adherents. His father-in-law, Alexander Biggar had a son with a local woman. Dunn's son (with Biggar's daughter) Robert grew up in a creolised milieu (Ballard, 1985). Ballard (1985:25) suggests that the "extreme isolation from metropolitan society bred a spirit of individualism and fostered a cultural tolerance among many of Natal's frontiersmen". From an early age, these characteristics were instilled in John Dunn. Later, John voluntarily rejected colonial society "to settle permanently in an African society beyond metropolitan control" (Ballard, 1985:47). By 1857, he had immersed himself in the indigenous way of life. Ballard (1985) provides a detailed biography of John Dunn. It is however important to note his rejection of colonial society, his establishment of himself as a chief over a number of different homesteads in different

districts (Later, Dunn was appointed by the British as one of thirteen chiefs to rule Zululand in the aftermath of the 1879 Anglo-Zulu War) and his relationships with his indigenous wives and concubines – Ballard (1985) states that Dunn had 49 wives and an estimated one hundred and seventeen children. Like the Fynn community, the Dunn community has struggled to access land and have been involved over the years in numerous, contentious land claims.¹⁶ Their predicament and situation highlights that as much as the colonists, such as Russell, and later, apartheid society would have liked to erase the imbricated past, such communities remain visible and vocal symbols of Durban's creolised foundations. The lives of Fynn, Dunn and their descendants are constant reminders of the space and society that continues to infuse the cultural fabric of Durban and KwaZulu-Natal.

The consequence of this interaction is that identity in the space known as Durban has always been co-constituting. Any reading of culture must thus take into account mutual entanglements (Nuttall, 2004). Ways of being black necessarily shade ways of being white. The reverse is also true. In this manner, it becomes more acceptable – not ridiculous – to have elements of black Africanness in white culture and elements of whiteness in black African culture. Both identities are not alien or mutually exclusive. This chapter has attempted to pay more attention to “the significant influence of the causal and ongoing interactions between black and white which have shaped black and white identity” (Robinson, 2003b:790). Instead of generalising about the relationship between the coloniser and the colonised (as postcolonial theory has been wont to do), this relationship has been examined within Durban's particular historical context. Durban's pre-colonial foundations underscore the current pattern of social relations in the city and, while not denying gross injustices, serve to suggest that Durban's identity is predicated on a lengthy history of cohabitation and mutual creolisation. For, as much as the colonial (and later the apartheid) spatial arrangement was designed to separate difference, it simultaneously unpredictably and routinely brought differences together. In this frame, the city assumes a crucial position. In South Africa, while the city may have been segregated, “it was also the site of numerous interactions and encounters” (Robinson, 2002b:118). Moreover, imaginative or fictional geographies of the city played a part, as they still do today, in creating mutual city-worlds

¹⁶ See Independent Newspapers Library (Fynn, Morris; Zululand General; Personalities Files, John Dunn and QDMS Database).

despite the reality of physical separation (Robinson, 2002b; Low, 1996). It is far more profitable to look for these imbrications and connections rather reproduce easier narratives of separation and exclusion. In this manner, the narrative of Durban's pre-colonial origins suggest there are cultural resources available that can assist in the rebuilding of post-apartheid South African society and cities (Robinson, 2004b, 2003b, 2002b). Certainly, despite colonialism and apartheid, Durban is a palimpsest space.

Thus, the narrative presented here regarding Durban's pre-colonial, imbricated origins suggests that simple accounts of separation and dominance do not represent the full spectrum of relationships and encounters which occurred both in history and up to the present. In a sense then, the "challenge for a post-apartheid urban cultural politics is to enable, and build on, the overlapping routes through, and common memories of, the same city spaces and social worlds that already exist" (Robinson, 2003b:791).

It is a pity that such histories are not invoked in the present, post-apartheid context as they point to a sharing of biological and cultural roots (Jonker, 2003). The following chapters in this Part of the thesis uncover the manner in which discursive and material tourist strategies work in accordance with the colonial attitude of marginalising this section of Durban's history and instead rely on stereotypical, invented colonial myths in order to market Durban and its identity. The strategies discussed in Part IV seek to represent the creolisations of the present and tie them to formulating a new post-apartheid urban, Durban identity. Such strivings would do well to consider the long history of such cultural forms and connect them to an earlier history of creolisation.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a platform for examining Durban's post-apartheid representational strategies. It does so from the vantage point of Part II's discussion of the postcolonial diver(C)ity. Specifically drawing on notions of creolisation, this chapter has ignited the prospect of reading Durban's current postcolonial identity by considering its history, identity and form within a legacy of co-production. The chapter treats Durban's urbanity and identity as closely intertwined, highlighting that pre-colonial times were marked by a creolised identity and settlement pattern while the situation was significantly altered by the advent of colonialism. While others have highlighted the integration of Durban's pre-colonial period and also discussed Durban's colonial origins, this chapter has attempted to expand understandings of Durban's urban life and form by

juxtaposing the sentiments and attitudes of the pre-colonial and colonial period. This distinction reveals the manner in which the later colonial tradition tried to suppress early creolisations by reinventing and structuring a colonial landscape. However, this chapter argues that the pre-colonial actors have left an indelible, vibrant, creolised African memory on Durban's city life and form which can be accessed by various artistic endeavours today. Chapters 7 and 8 consider approaches that seek to creatively forge new, urban and cultural approaches to Durban's African urbanity and identity which in spirit link to Durban's creolised foundations. On the other hand, Chapters 5 and 6 detail the manner in which mainstream marketing of Durban and its identity follows the tradition of reinventing colonial stereotypes which disguise past and present creolisations. It is to these discursive and material representations of Africanity that the argument now turns.

5

Durban: Gateway to the 'Kingdom'

"The wilderness areas of the Zulu Kingdom provide adventure enthusiasts with a wonderful opportunity to enter those wild places undisturbed by civilisation. Strap on your backpack, make sure your water bottle is full and enter the magical world of wild Africa" (KZNTA, n.d.a:26).

Introduction

Contemporary Durban's identity is multifaceted. Beginning here, the thesis reads different versions of Durban's post-apartheid identity. Despite the imbricated history presented in the previous chapter, Chapter 5 explores how Durban and its identity is often represented on the basis of a discursive-material dualism which draws inspiration from ruralised, colonial tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture. In this regard, discursive, colonially inherited notions of identity are set in motion and have material manifestation in the built environment through a high-profile tourism campaign which situates Durban as the gateway to the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'. Discursive strategies are far from benign constructs and enter city-level consciousness in a manner which begins to inform the ways in which cities are conceived, developed and experienced. Chapter 6 furthers this argument by exploring the manner in which discursive positionings are expressed materially in new developments like uShaka Marine World. Together, Chapters 5 and 6 seek to illustrate how mainstream tourism marketing efforts shape Durban's identity in terms of reinvented, ruralised colonial tropes. Chapters 7 and 8 offer a counterpoint to such imaginings of identity by suggesting that the African Renaissance project offers a substantive opportunity to harness Durban's identity to urban, African manifestations of culture.

Using a progressive theory approach, the narrative has been structured thus far in a linear fashion to enable a specific and informed discussion on the entrepôt of Durban as a postcolonial, African city. Reading the diver(c)ity in relation to its postcolonial context enabled a broad framework to be established in Chapter 2, allowing clarification on key concepts such as postcolonial representations, identities and cities. Thereafter, the focus shifted in Chapter 3 to the more specific context of Africa (encompassing both its identity and urbanity). In this frame, the importance of the 'Durban System' was highlighted; for, it initiated a system of representation that, to this

day, renders African urbanity as an anathema and creates the environment in which creolising past versions of Durban's Africanity can be ignored. It is in this sense that this chapter examines the manner in which Durban's Africanity is at times re-coded according to ruralised, colonial tropes. Before examining how Durban is represented through the tropes of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign, a brief discussion concerning how cities sell and brand themselves is particularly relevant.

Selling Cities

Geographical branding is the latest trend. Co-operative branding for rural destinations is an ever more popular activity (Cai, 2002), as is city branding (Finucan, 2002). Clearly, the "identities of destinations around the world are endlessly reinvented as marketing creates powerful social and cultural representations of place" (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002:648). Hall (1998:27) observes that "one of the most obvious manifestations of entrepreneurialism among city governments has been the attention devoted to the transformation, or at least enhancement, of the image of the city". City branding then is effectively "an effort to brand an image of a city into the public's consciousness" (Finucan, 2002:10). Successful city branding campaigns have become so prevalent that consulting firms specialise in creating city (and downtown) marketing campaigns (see Urban Marketing Collaborative, 1998-2002). City branding is a type of shorthand "so that when people think of your city, they automatically think of what is best about it" (Atkinson, cited in Finucan, 2002:11). Logos, slogans and mottoes are all part of the branding process (Finucan, 2002). Atkinson (cited in Finucan, 2002:11) contends that a "municipality is a product for everyone...But to brand this product, you must be able to deliver an experience". Importantly, city branding "has the potential to build users for life and promote long-term, profitable growth" (Finucan, 2002:13). Catlett (cited in Finucan, 2002:13) states: "It will be critical for cities of the future to have a brand identity – something that sets them apart from the rest". Instead of searching for holiday alternatives, people will "rely on a specific brand to provide the experience they're looking for" (Catlett, cited in Finucan, 2002:3).

Processes of branding, image making or visualisation "are always part of the way in which identities are formed, articulated, and contested" (Jacobs, 1998:275). Following Radcliffe (1996), as pointed out in Chapter 2, imagining and imaging the postcolonial city is based on discourses about its history, terrain and population. These discourses are more than likely biased and can lead to particular conceptions of certain

cities being formulated. For example, despite its high number of rapes and homicides, Cape Town, in its place-selling strategy, has successfully managed to represent itself as one of Africa's premier tourist destinations (Robins, 2000). However, identities formed by image marketing are always open to refusals and reinterpretations which may operate in radical and subversive ways (Jacobs, 1998). As a result, Jacobs (1998:275) argues that the visual regimes of cities should be understood as "activated spheres of practice in which various vectors of power and difference are meaningfully negotiated".

The creation and marketing of discursive and visual regimes has become increasingly important for contemporary cities. Over the last two decades, the concept of selling cities has attracted growing attention from urban geographers (Rice, 1994). Useful on this subject is Kearns and Philo's (1993) edited anthology. Philo and Kearns (1993:2-3) contend that,

the practice of selling places entails the various ways in which public and private agencies...often working collaboratively – strive to 'sell' the image of a particular geographically defined 'place', usually a city or a town, so as to make it attractive to economic enterprises, to tourists and even to inhabitants of that place.

In this vein, Philo and Kearns (1993) argue that selling places is also a subtle form of socialisation designed to convince local citizens of their importance to the project when in fact, very often, they will be disadvantaged by it. Philo and Kearns (1993:3) believe that "central to the activities subsumed under the heading of selling places is often a conscious and deliberate manipulation of culture in an effort to enhance the appeal and interest of places". Part of this involves manipulating culture in order to promote lifestyles, art forms and traditions that are supposed to have local roots (Philo & Kearns, 1993). This manipulation has varying degrees of impact. For example, guidebook representations construct particular images of cities from London (Gilbert, 1999) to Harare but the impacts are perhaps more weighty in terms of the material outcomes which such representations produce in Third World contexts.

Place marketing has historically formed an integral part of urbanisation. Notwithstanding this, its most widespread form is that which is prevalent and dominant today (Ward, 1998). Indeed, the "transformation, enhancement and promotion of urban image have emerged as central planks of the entrepreneurial governance of western cities" (Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002:61). Economic rationales underpin such strategies with the emphasis on attracting jobs, tourists and residents especially "to replace

declining former manufacturing economies" (Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002:61).¹ In this climate, local entrepreneurialism has emerged with the decline in Fordist production (McCarthy, 1998). The shift to local entrepreneurialism has resulted in the concept of city marketing becoming critical for local authorities in their attempts to remain competitive (Hall & Hubbard, 1998; McCarthy, 1998). Indeed, marketing cities "has become a process synonymous with and fundamental to the urban geography of entrepreneurial cities" (Hall, 1998:29).

Marketing cities is based on the need to reposition, or re-image the city in order to attract investment, trade and tourism. Accordingly, city marketing "strategies have frequently been based on the projection of a distinctive identity" (McCarthy, 1998:338). Bradley, Hall and Harrison (2002) identify two theoretical approaches within the 'selling cities' literature. The first, in the vein of the Kearns and Philo (1993) collection, "links urban marketing to a deeper political economy" (Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002:61) perspective. The second focuses on "more practical aspects of urban marketing by examining the types of approaches that urban marketers adopt and their relative successes" (Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002:61). Bradley, Hall and Harrison (2002) suggest research should be undertaken in a third area. Sustained academic investigation, they argue, is required into the impacts and/ or consumption of place promotion strategies (Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002). Thus, an area requiring investigation is the effect of place promotion strategies on identity and it is precisely this point which the following two chapters explore. Through understanding the impact of place promotion on city identity, "a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between place promotion, urban image and urban development can be achieved" (Bradley, Hall & Harrison, 2002:69).

Nijman (1999) provides a useful study of the relationship between place promotion, urban image and development in his study of the cultural globalisation of Amsterdam's identity. He illustrates how city identity, under the forces of cultural globalisation, can be re-imagined so that it is intertwined artificially with authenticity so that the 'real' city is obscured – a point particularly relevant here. Cultural globalisation has commodified Amsterdam's identity as a tolerant place (for sex and drugs). This decor of tolerance has impacted on the city so that "a significant part of the city centre

¹ Durban is one such city which faces a declining manufacturing and industrial sector prompted by a neoliberal, de-industrialisation trend.

has evolved...into a sort of 'theme park'" (Nijman, 1999:156). This theme park is centred around drugs and sex; it is not gated but payment is per consumption. As Nijman observes, Amsterdam is not the only city which has experienced the forces of cultural globalisation. In a very different context, a decor of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture (a "natural theme park" [KZNTA, 2002v]) has impacted on the city of Durban so that a significant part of the inner city has evolved into a gated 'theme park': uShaka Marine World, obscuring the 'real' nature and history of the city.

Nijman (1999:162) suggests that, through theming, urban identities are becoming more superficial. Moreover, these identities "are increasingly determined in the realm of globally transmitted sound-and-vision-bites, and this is in turn reflected in the local culture itself" (Nijman, 1999:162). In this way, discursive ideas about cities are affecting both discursive and material facets of local life. Mass tourism is enabling "an increasingly shallow understanding of local cultures and identities [and in] the process, the localities themselves turn into caricatures or mutant reflections of their past" (Nijman, 1999:162). Nijman (1999:162) argues that while popular knowledge of the world's cultures is increasing, understanding of individual places is becoming shallower which is resulting in the "vulgarization of the world's cultural geography".

Part of this vulgarization stems from improved communications technologies. Recently, the Internet has become intrinsic in terms of place promotion, city marketing and urban image development. There is increased interest in relation to tourism and selling cities on the Internet (Doolin, Burgess & Cooper, 2002; Urban, 2002; Hanna & Miller, 1997). Urban's (2002:56) study "shows that cities represent themselves on the World Wide Web in a surprisingly similar way, despite their different cultural and geographical settings". However, "activities that are targeted to an international audience, including tourist services, are much more common among the sample cities situated in poorer countries" (Urban, 2002:56). Cities certainly use their websites to shape their reputation and their image (Urban, 2002). Durban is no exception².

Selling Durban

The selling of cities and the associated marketing of culture has crucial relevance when examining the strategies and efforts used to market Durban. This thesis is most interested in identity at the collective city scale. At the outset, it is useful to note

² See www.zulu.org.za and www.durban.org.za.

the possibilities available for marketing collective city scale identities by briefly discussing a Spanish example. Pasqual Maragall (cited in McNeill, 2001:347, emphasis added), the Mayor of Barcelona from 1982-1997, has observed that his city made a quantitative leap to become "the centre of a euroregion of 15 million inhabitants...that aspires to be the *gateway* to southern Europe and one of the European cultural capitals". Maragall's conception is acutely aware of the economic and cultural benefits of situating Barcelona as the gateway to a vast euroregion. During his tenure as Mayor, Maragall recentred the city's identity "around the urban, international and multicultural, rather than the 'timeless' and language-based properties of Catalan identity" (McNeill, 2001:348). Maragall thus favoured "a 'metropolitan' vision of Catalonia, with Barcelona acting as a cultural, political, economic and intellectual core endowing the 'timeless' myth of Catalonia with a pluralist cosmopolitanism" (McNeill, 2001:348). McNeill (2001:340) argues for the existence of a peculiar type of "'capitality' of certain cities in relation to the broader (nation) state territory coalition politics". In this view, "cities are central to the evolution of 'grander' territorial political schemes" (McNeill, 2001:341). While McNeill's (2001) focus is centred on the city as locus of political identity, his argument displays the role that the city plays at multiple spatial levels. Barcelona, under Maragall, made use of history, politics and culture to engage with superior political scales: that of Catalonia, Spain and Europe. Durban seeks to do the same.

Durban's municipality and those responsible for its marketing is keen to harness or access these superior provincial, national and trans-national political scales and are aware of the economic benefits accruing from such an engagement. Durban's officials are attempting to facilitate a certain capitality in Durban's engagement with KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and the African continent. Clearly, Durban is being positioned as a gateway to KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa and even Africa. Yet, in the main, the approach is counter-intuitive to the Barcelona example. Instead of a metropolitan view of KwaZulu-Natal, which would disturb tired notions of African identity and reality, and which would feature Durban as the cultural, political, economic and intellectual core, the focus is often on the myth of 'timeless' rurality. Durban is accordingly represented primarily through the ruralising codes of the KwaZulu-Natal

Tourism Authority's (KZNTA)³ 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. Such a non-urban depiction is facilitated by the representational legacy of the 'Durban System'.

In fact, the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign constantly marginalises one important space in KwaZulu-Natal: the urban space of Durban. This is mirrored in the relationship between the two tourism bodies responsible for marketing Durban. Apart from the provincial tourism authority, the KZNTA, which operates out of its headquarters in the Durban central business district, another tourism body exists. 'Durban Africa' is the tourism authority ostensibly responsible for the marketing of Durban. Both 'Durban Africa' and KZNTA have overlapping concerns in that both undertake and have commitments to promoting Durban. In fact, the two groups work closely together. However, in the axis of power, 'Durban Africa' appears to be subservient to the provincial authority in terms of power, aim and reach. In short, the abilities, capabilities, extent and authority of KZNTA are greater. It is staffed by a greater number of people and produces a wider variety and extent of publicity material.

Since the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign is the more visible strategy in and around the city of Durban, and because it has the highest brand recognition, it has been decided to focus on the strategies of the KZNTA. Indeed, as will be illustrated later, in popular consciousness, Durban is often aligned with the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'. Durban is actively promoted by the KZNTA as the gateway to the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' (KZNTA, 2002s). As the KZNTA is the most powerful mediator and marketer of Durban's image, the predominantly rural-focused 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign as a whole requires some detailed analysis. It is precisely this rural context which leads to particular discursive notions of identity, on the part of Durban, to be developed.

A Context for Postcolonial/ Neocolonial Critique

Tourism is not the primary focus of this thesis; however, marketing strategies aimed at the boosting of tourism in both Durban and KwaZulu-Natal have led to particularised conceptions of Durban's identity. As mentioned in Chapter 1, tourism is viewed as a key component of Durban's economy and is of crucial importance to the

³ While KZNTA is the tourism authority's legal name, it publicly uses Tourism KwaZulu-Natal as it is easier to say and sounds less foreboding (Coleman Interview, 2004). For uniformity, the name KZNTA has been used throughout this thesis.

eThekweni Municipality as it is to the province of KwaZulu-Natal as a whole.⁴ The actual benefits of tourism as a development strategy for Third World countries are highly contested (Sreekumar & Parayil, 2002; Teye, Sönmez & Sirakaya, 2002). Commentators like Rassool and Witz (1996) remind one of the often overlooked point that tourism is not purely an isolated economic generator. In addition, tourism has political, social and cultural ramifications.

The theoretical ramifications of tourism have increasingly become the focus of postcolonial scholarship where researchers have been especially concerned to investigate the role of images in the cultural representation of contemporary cultures and societies that have negotiated (and currently still negotiate) a history of colonialism. Many argue that the images of place, people and culture which are central to the marketing mechanisms of tourism actively work to perpetuate modern forms of colonial attitude and practice. Indeed, Crick (1989:322) emphasises that "the very way a tourism industry is planned and shaped will recreate the fabric of the colonial situation". Crick (1989: 322-323) proposes that:

international tourism recapitulates a historical process; areas of one's country are given over to the pleasure of foreigners, and the rhetoric of development serves as a defence...tourism is a part of a continuation of the cluster of attitudes that make up colonial social psychology – submissiveness, arrogance, and so on.

The view of tourism as colonialist or imperialistic assumes that tourism implicates visitors and hosts in a dominant-subordinate relationship (Nash 1996), with the result that tourism's "resonances with a climate of imperial adventure, [and] conquest...are rarely absent" (Banerjea, 1999:18). Similarly, Sweet (cited in Bend, 2000:1) bluntly states:

Let's not pretend that, by finding some unspoiled spot that's not even mentioned in the lonely planet, we're doing something that is somehow more laudable than planting the Union Jack in a foreign beach. At least when our 19th century forbears went around the world having authentic cultural experiences, they had the decency to call it colonialism.

⁴ Statistics on KwaZulu-Natal and Durban's tourism are confusing and in many cases not comparable. Nevertheless, some picture of its nature is provided here. Tourism represents a total market value of R20.8 million to the province. Approximately 1.2 million foreign tourists visit KwaZulu-Natal annually – on average, 69% of these tourists visit Durban. Domestically, roughly 13.9 million trips are taken (domestic visitors may undertake multiple trips). An estimated 3.5 million tourists visit Durban. It is however difficult to ascertain, from the statistics available,

In addition to the postcolonial criticism of tourism, many would argue that tourism has neocolonial tendencies. In this view, tourism is considered to be “‘leisure imperialism’, the hedonistic face of neocolonialism” (Crick, 1989:322), and it creates economic dependencies that replicate imperial or colonial forms of subjugation and control (Cohen, 1984). A key focus of neocolonial research on tourism is the issue of economic dependence. Neocolonial scholars argue that tourists arrive in destinations like South Africa armed “with foreign currency” (Guy, 1998:167). Local development is heavily reliant on this currency. Accordingly, local populations are often required to re-enact cultural and racial stereotypes of themselves for the benefit of tourists and even where they are able to break out of these, “humble service roles predominate” (Crick, 1989:322). In a country like South Africa, with a history of servitude and oppression, the perpetuation of these roles is all too easily made integral to the functioning of an industry which prides itself on service and world-class hospitality.

Thus, tourism’s practices are frequently located within colonial or neocolonial frameworks. Also highly visible amongst these practices is image creation. After all, tourism “is a collection of projected images which establishes the boundaries of experience. Understanding...tourism is, thus, above all else, an analysis of images” (Dann, 1996: 79). It is self-evident that the “tourism industry is an important arena in which discourses concerning the landscape, cultures and natures of tourist places are represented” (Norton, 1996:358). The “apparently innocent representations” contained in tourism marketing texts, for instance, could in fact be said to “generate specific cultural meanings from particular ideological positions” (Norton, 1996:258). Thus, views of tourism as a significant economic generator need to be juxtaposed against the understanding that tourism is “about the construction, packaging, transmission and consumption of images and representations of society and its past” (Rassool & Witz, 1996:335). It is in terms of challenging tourism and its associated representations of, and effect on, identity that this thesis is interested in unpacking the tropes central to the KZNTA’s ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ campaign. This will entail an initial analysis of the marketing strategy and rationale behind the campaign and later, a deconstructive reading of the major themes of the campaign’s imagery.

whether these tourists are only visiting Durban or also visiting other destinations in the province (KZNTA, 2004; The Economic Development Department, 2001).

Dimensions of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' Campaign

The KZNTA, a parastatal agency, is responsible for heightening awareness of KwaZulu-Natal's attractiveness as a tourist destination and the development and promotion of the KwaZulu-Natal tourism product (KZNTA, 2001b). KZNTA's vision is "For the province of KwaZulu-Natal to be recognised nationally and internationally as Africa's premier tourism destination" (KZNTA, 2002a:1, 2000-2003:3). Through a carefully orchestrated multi-media campaign, the KZNTA delimits the province into appropriately packaged experiences and destinations for the tourist's benefit. Most visibly, the KZNTA markets KwaZulu-Natal through the brand identity: 'The Kingdom of the Zulu'. This branding enables the provincial tourism authority to represent KwaZulu-Natal through intersecting images of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture. Thus, royalty, ethnicity and aboriginality, landscape and wildlife are incorporated into the commodified codes of tourism and are offered to tourists for their consumption and pleasure.

Here, the concern is to investigate the representations and images generated by the marketing of KwaZulu-Natal in the KZNTA's 'Kingdom of the Zulu' promotional literature in order to make comment on the identity which it ultimately shapes for Durban. The broader marketing campaign needs to be analysed as it makes use of the same representational codes that are used in connection with promoting Durban. According to Waitt and Head (2002:326), "brochures and guidebooks carry many connotative messages which are interesting to researchers investigating place promotion". Promotional literature, issued by the provincial tourism authority, is profitably viewed as a cultural object that sustains colonial myths in the public imagining. Through various promotional strategies, "the tourist industry appropriates, communicates, circulates and disseminates place myths to help generate leisure spaces" (Waitt & Head, 2002:339). Indeed, promotional materials not only disseminate information but also contribute to entrenching social constructions of place. Imagery created by and sustaining the KwaZulu-Natal tourism industry thus shapes the reinvention of place. In many ways, "Tourism representations also continue to perpetuate an ideological project initiated in the colonial era" (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002:663). Accordingly, the "(post)colonial consumer fantasy continues to be embedded in the political and sociocultural (con)text from which tourism originated" (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2002:663).

Not surprisingly given the colonial and apartheid context in which tourism developed in the province, KwaZulu-Natal is predominantly portrayed both as an idyllic

utopian paradise and an untamed wild frontier where savage beasts and indigenous people roam. Consequently, the KZNTA reproduces forms of colonial discourse in its representations of contemporary KwaZulu-Natal to potential visitors. In both their visual and written languages, the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' tourist brochures promise the intrepid tourist a virgin space which invites the various colonising and consumerist agencies characteristic of the tourist encounter.

The KZNTA initiated the branding concept 'Kingdom of the Zulu' in 1998/1999 (Anonymous Informant Interview, 2001). This strategy seeks to position "KwaZulu-Natal as a globally competitive tourist destination and [is committed] to



Figure 5.1: 'Kingdom of the Zulu' Logo (KZNTA, 2002d)

growing the provincial tourism economy and employment opportunities" (KZNTA, 2000-2003).

The central logo of the campaign (see Figure 5.1) depicts a 'Zulu' warrior in traditional dress holding a shield and assegai. The similarity between this figure and the image of Shaka presented in Isaacs' ([1836] 1936) volume (reproduced in Figure 4.1 in the previous chapter) is undeniable. Sun rays radiate out from the assegai and the figure is standing on rolling green hills. The 'Kingdom of the Zulu' phrasing is prominently positioned adjacent to

the figure. The words, 'South Africa', clarify the geographical location of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' and a web address is also given. The Tourist Information Services Manager of the KZNTA, James Seymour (Interview, 2002), observes that the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' marketing campaign has been extremely successful. More than 40% of South Africans know about the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' and 30% of international tourists leaving South Africa (30% of these tourists would have visited KwaZulu-Natal) have noted the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' and its logo (Seymour Interview, 2002).

The KZNTA makes use of a number of marketing tools e.g. the publication of an annual, official travel and tourism guide (KZNTA, 2002/3); the publishing of a provincial road map (KZNTA, 2002c); publishing various niche brochures; running a 'Kingdom of the Zulu' website (www.zulu.org.za); supporting a Fax-On-Demand Service; producing a provincial tourism video (KZNTA, 2002v) which has also been made available in CD-ROM format (KZNTA, 2002w); supplying establishments with visitor's books; and producing and distributing marketing infrastructure required for

trade shows, exhibitions, conferences and event displays (KZNTA, 2002/2003, 2000-2003). The KZNTA publishes a newsletter in both paper and electronic format and participates in numerous domestic and international trade and consumer shows (KZNTA, 2002/2003). In addition, they provide a number of training and education opportunities in the field of tourism. KZNTA has a commitment to financially support small businesses as well as to facilitate community-based tourism projects. The KZNTA also periodically hosts a range of (domestic and international) media and trade representatives so that these representatives can provide more exposure for the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' in their home cities and countries.

The campaign strategy is multidimensional, inventive and wide reaching, using a range of mediums, among them visual, verbal, electronic and audio. For instance, while driving one's car anywhere in South Africa, one may simultaneously be confronted with an elaborately painted bus depicting an endless, deserted 'Kingdom of the Zulu' beach and hear a jingle on the radio promoting the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'. If one's cellphone service provider is Vodacom, a text message may pop up on one's screen reminding one that "with balmy days and tropical nights, only the weather is warmer than our welcome in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'. Wozani. Our Kingdom Calls" (Anonymous Informant Interview, 2001). The effect serves to represent the province not in terms of established geographical-political markers such as 'KwaZulu-Natal', but rather through tourism marketing rhetoric as the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'.

Key areas of priority for the KZNTA include establishing a strategic, overall marketing framework for the province; developing a strategic tourism product which is consistent with the overall branding and theme of the province; and devising international and domestic tourism marketing strategies (KZNTA, 2000-2003:8). The marketing campaign of the KZNTA follows a two-pronged approach. Both 'all round marketing' and 'sector specific' marketing strategies are conducted. The former strategy involves promoting brand consciousness through ubiquitous advertising both locally and nationally. Domestically, it is interesting that the KZNTA rates tourists from KwaZulu-Natal as its second most important source market for holidaymakers. Gauteng is the primary source market, followed in decreasing significance by KwaZulu-Natal, the Free State/ Northern Cape, Limpopo/ North-West and Mpumalanga (KZNTA, 2002x). In this regard, the KZNTA attempts not to ignore its own internal and national consumers.

'Sector specific' marketing, in comparison, is predominantly international in orientation. The United Kingdom, Germany, the United States of America, France and

the Netherlands have been centrally targeted in the past and provide a steady stream of visitors to the province. International marketing is more difficult than local advertising as exchange rates inhibit large international budgets; nevertheless, 'brand awareness' representatives are based in a number of overseas tourist information offices. Furthermore, internationally, the KZNTA employs a 'piggy back' marketing strategy where advertising is not paid for directly and partnerships and deals are formed. For example, when Valpré International representatives decided to introduce a new flavour into their water product range, they were allowed to shoot footage in the Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park in exchange for mention in the advertisement that the film location was the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' (Anonymous Informant Interview, 2001).

There are multiple reasons for the selection of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' branding concept, its imagery, and its associated pay-off line – 'Wozani. Our Kingdom Calls'. Firstly, the KZNTA recognises that the oldest, most unique and still the most visible culture associated with the province is that of the Zulus (Seymour Interview, 2002). Secondly, KwaZulu-Natal is the only province in the country which is host to a living royal family and an active monarchy (Anonymous Informant Interview, 2001). Consequently, "the imagery to be used to achieve [the KZNTA's stated objective]...include[s] the Zulu monarchy and its cultural identity, the province's strongest unique attribute". (KZNTA, 2001f:1). As both Seymour (Interview 2002) and Chief Executive Officer of the KZNTA Gareth Coleman (Interview 2004) contend, the concept of 'the Zulu' is internationally renowned. Attempts to position KwaZulu-Natal in consumer consciousness through the moniker 'Kingdom' thus invoke associations with the Zulu monarchy's lineage (particularly Shaka), and also recognise that "Zulu imagery already occupies a position in the global consumer's mind" and that 'the Zulu' "is potentially a globally competitive tourism brand" (KZNTA, 2001f:1). While Seymour (Interview, 2002) argues that it not their intention to do so, the KZNTA seems to capitalise on existing and stereotypical conceptions of 'Zulus' and their culture. He argues that his organisation does not mean to be ethnocentric; rather, the intention is to use the concept of 'the Zulu' for initial recognition and then link it to the other imagery (e.g. the greater Durban area) that the province is known for. The idea is to use consciousness about 'the Zulu' to push other elements and destinations in the province (Coleman Interview, 2004; Seymour Interview, 2002). To some extent this is achieved but as will become evident later, colonial tropes are never completely absent from their marketing campaign. If indigenous culture is not being profiled and other destinations or

elements pushed, the campaign is more than likely appealing to paradisaal or adventure stereotypes.

Somewhat contradictorily given the 'Zulu' focus of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign, the provincial tourism authority also claims that the brand is about the multicultural diversity of the province. Hence, the KZNTA's stated objective is "to promote KwaZulu-Natal as a magical kingdom...and as a multi-cultural destination" (KZNTA, 2001f:1). Black Africans, whites, coloureds and Indians are all seen by the KZNTA to inhabit the same vibrant cultural space of 'The Kingdom of the Zulu', so that 'Zulu' does not necessarily refer to a particular people or culture. Being 'Zulu' in the eyes of the KZNTA is not primarily about race but about having feelings for and connections to a wider provincial community. 'Zuluness', the tourism authority argues, is a state which is currently being redefined in the province (Anonymous Informant Interview, 2001).

Even glanced at superficially, it is evident that there are rampant contradictions in the use of the term 'Zulu' in provincial marketing strategies. 'Zuluness' is simultaneously mobilised by tourism bodies as a specific cultural affiliation (and/ or an identity) and as a more diffuse 'structure of communal feeling'. The latter idealistically ignores not only continuing sociocultural differences amongst the various inhabitants of KwaZulu-Natal but also the often conflict-ridden claims to secure the pre-eminent, most politically influential form of 'Zulu identity' by cultural-political groups such as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) and the Zulu Royal house. Indeed, 'Zulus' are not a homogenous group and there is little evidence of a strong ethnic consciousness or affiliation bar a commitment to the isiZulu language (Dlamini, 2001; Campbell, Maré & Walker, 1995).

Recently, the branding strategy has been revised by the KZNTA. Having conducted qualitative focus groups amongst Gauteng holidaymakers, it became apparent that the branding required modification. The focus groups suggested that while the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' was a powerful brand, the image of the warrior brandishing a



Figure 5.2: New 'Zulu Kingdom' Logo (KZNTA, 2006)

shield and assegai invoked violent and aggressive connotations (Scymour Interview, 2002). In terms of the new 'Zulu Kingdom' logo (see Figure 5.2) which was introduced in late 2003, the shield remains and the warrior figure is excluded (Focus groups revealed that the assegai and the shield were the two objects most associated with the province of KwaZulu-Natal [KZNTA, 2002x]). The

removal of the indigenous figure is positive in that 'Zuluness' will no longer be immediately foregrounded as a 'primitive' culture. The phrasing 'Kingdom of the Zulu' has been largely phased out in a move to represent the province as the 'Zulu Kingdom' as this is the correct terminology in isiZulu – as opposed to 'Kingdom of the Zulu' which has been seen as offensive to isiZulu speakers and at other times as a tongue-twister (Coleman Interview, 2004; Seymour Interview, 2002). Coleman (Interview, 2004) also contends that it was not advisable to depart significantly from the previous branding because the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' symbol was extremely popular. He admits that a major problem with the brand was that it was weak from a graphic design point of view. The logo did not transfer well onto television and was difficult to enlarge. The positioning of the word 'Zulu' prioritises what the KZNTA see as the strength of their brand. It is for this reason that in the new symbol, the word 'Zulu' is far more prominent.

However, Coleman (Interview, 2004) argues that in actual fact, the rebranding exercise represents a shift away from Zulu culture at its core towards destination marketing. He observes that people come to KwaZulu-Natal for four reasons: the beach, culture (including museums, art and music), wildlife and natural scenic beauty. Accordingly, the KZNTA's aim is to align destinations with specific types of product offerings which draw on these elements, i.e. market the Elephant Coast (which is in the north of the province) primarily as a wildlife-type destination. These products are marketed much more strongly to the consumer and the 'Zulu Kingdom' then becomes part of an umbrella type of brand and the label. Coleman (Interview, 2004) argues that the shift is an attempt to modernise and bring a tourism brand to life, while at the same time downplays the role of Zulu culture as the key to bringing visitors to KwaZulu-Natal.

While the thesis notes these developments, it seems that the shift appears to be merely in semantics and design and not in spirit. The brand 'Zulu Kingdom' with its linguistic and design emphasis on the word 'Zulu' actually prioritises ethnicity more strongly than the previous logo. While this chapter primarily focuses on promotional materials produced prior to the shift, as mentioned, with the exception of swapping one logo for another, the content post-shift has remained relatively constant. Thus, despite these branding changes, it seems the KZNTA continues to explore brand extensions to the core brand of 'Zulu' identity by focussing on the marketing of beach, wildlife, cultural and natural landscape 'experiences' within various geographical destinations (e.g. Durban, Drakensberg, North Coast, South Coast, Zululand and Midlands). Close analysis of these 'experiences' reveals a focus on three general

elements: adventure, paradise and indigenous culture, all of which are highlighted at different junctures (in both compatible and mutually exclusive ways) in the KZNTA campaign promotional literature.

At this point, it is crucial to note that rural environments are more prevalent in the marketing material than those of the city. The tourist is most frequently offered an escape from the jaded, artificial places characteristic of 'civilisation' to the 'uncivilised' countryside. These images offer the tourist the pleasures of a landscape for visual consumption. Thus in the image realm which constitutes the 'Kingdom of the Zulu', the rural is an ideologically preferred space over the urban. For this reason, Durban and its marketing cannot be understood without reference to the larger rural campaign. Before addressing Durban more specifically, the rural representational codes of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign as a whole need to be understood as these are the same codes through which the city is filtered.

Thus, the need becomes apparent to explore further how the commodification of KwaZulu-Natal in the tourist literature reproduces colonial metanarratives that situate the province within the tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture. Through an analysis of these three overriding themes, it is hoped to demonstrate more specifically the attempt by the KZNTA to represent the province through intersecting idealisations of place that contribute to the brand identity of KwaZulu-Natal as the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'. This analysis begins by looking at how the province of KwaZulu-Natal is reinvented through the colonially inherited trope of paradise.

Paradise

"Welcome to Paradise" (KZNTA, 2002/3:5).

The trope of paradise is prevalent throughout the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign strategy. This trope is evident in the representations of place found in publicity literature produced under the direct authority of the KZNTA and in the material generated by various regional councils whose promotion of their areas to tourists piggybacks on the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' brand. Thus, KwaZulu-Natal, "now known as Kingdom of the Zulu; is truly a slice of heaven, a tourist paradise" (KZNTA, 2002l:1). Rhetoric used in the promotional brochures is melodic and celebratory. An example of

this is evident in the description of Zululand: "Fertile plains, valleys and forests stretch north from the Thukela River into magical Zululand, or the 'Land of Heaven'" (KZNTA, n.d.a:22). The Drakensberg, "Our Zulu Kingdom's natural inland 'border'" (KZNTA 2001g:1) is also crucial to the figuring of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' as a place of mythical and majestic proportions. Indeed, it is often explicitly referred to as a "slice of paradise" (KZNTA 2001g:1). Brochures proclaim, for instance, that the Drakensberg is "the legendary abode of dragons – and one of the most spectacular tourism attractions in all of Africa" (Uthukela Regional Council & Umzinyathi Regional Council 2001:1). The Drakensberg is repeatedly described in glowing terms, with the tourist encouraged to 'enjoy the "spectacular sight[s]" or the "scenic walks and drives"'. Effort is also made to convince the tourist that he or she will return from the Drakensberg with "sensational memories" (Uthukela Regional Council & Umzinyathi Regional Council, 2001:4), especially since both summer and winter are said to invest the landscape with their own particular beauty. In winter, the highest peaks "become spectacular snow-scapes, with the valleys and peaks transformed into a wonderland of white", while in summer, the Drakensberg "is idyllic with bird-song, luxuriant grasses and wildflowers – and cool streams cascading through gorges and rock pools" (Uthukela Regional Council & Umzinyathi Regional Council, 2001:3). These descriptions of the Drakensberg invoke images of an idyllic utopia. Similarly, the trope of paradise is made use of when promoting coastal areas within the province. Brochures promote the KwaZulu-Natal South Coast as "a land of golden beaches, forests, rolling hills and all-year-round sunshine...experience the South Coast, and you will know that you have touched paradise" (Ugu Regional Council, n.d.:1).

The bush biome of the game reserve is also given the paradisaal treatment. In fact, because 'the bush' seems synonymous with wilderness and 'wild nature', it seems to invite representation as a space "which lies outside...historical and geographical reach" (Whatmore & Thorne, 1998:435), with the result that the realities of both history and the present are obscured (Brooks, 2000). Africa has generally been presented as a continent without any history despite that conferred by its colonial encounter (Brooks, 2000). Thus, unsurprisingly, reference is often made to the timeless nature of the African 'bush' in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' promotional material. The 'bush' is exalted for its "raw and rugged beauty...arguably the most timeless treasure of the entire African continent" (KZNTA, 2001e:1). The KwaZulu-Natal landscape is "separated from the civilised world not only by space but by a chasm in time" (Waitt & Head,

2002:327). Clearly, promoting the various tourism locations of KwaZulu-Natal as paradise and as escapes from 'civilisation' and history is unabashedly the intent of the KZNTA. The tourism promotion of KwaZulu-Natal suggests that the tourist "can not only move to an unknown and unusual place but also backwards in time to experience an environment that predates European occupation" (Waitt & Head, 2002:326). Tourists are accordingly invited to "the greatest natural theme park on earth" (KZNTA, 2002v). This theme park "imagined as a place suspended in time, waiting for history to begin, provides the tourism industry with its porthole to prehistory, the land that time forgot" (Waitt & Head, 2002:327-328). This strategy operates despite the awkward fact that the associated metaphors, of virgin landscapes awaiting tourist discovery and penetration, are reminiscent of previous colonisations of KwaZulu-Natal. It ignores current realities and recalls the arrival of the British colonialists who sought to suppress evident creolisations by viewing the landscape as unoccupied.

Wildlife is an especially important component in maintaining the image of KwaZulu-Natal as primordial 'bush' (KZNTA, 2001d:1) or paradise. Led by the popular tourism hyperbole of the 'Big Five' (lion, elephant, buffalo, leopard and rhinoceros), in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' promotional literature, images of wildlife exist in harmony with representations of untamed 'bush' landscapes. The tourism authority openly states: "One of the Kingdom of the Zulu's biggest assets is its wildlife, including the 'Big Five' and many other rare and endangered species" (KZNTA, 2002/3:8). The promotional literature contends that "Countless species of animals, birds, plants and butterflies - many of them rare - await you!" (KZNTA, 2001a:1). Duikers, wildebeest, zebras, Knysna Loeries, African Fish Eagles and Narina Trogons...all are said to populate KwaZulu-Natal's paradisaal landscape (Ugu Regional Council, n.d.). Moreover, once a year, the tourist is told, "the greatest show on earth parades the coastline - an armada of sardines, seals, dolphins, sharks and sea birds" (KZNTA, 2002v). According to Rassool and Witz (1996:349), if the "main attraction for the international tourist to any African destination is the wildlife", the embedded stereotype is that "Africa is quintessentially 'animal'". Animals take visual precedence over people in much of the marketing material. KwaZulu-Natal wild spaces and game reserves are also often romanticised especially in terms of their 'linkage' to Shaka. The KZNTA's (2002v) promotional video observes with regard to 'wild' spaces: "Once the hunting ground of King Shaka, now home to the Big Five". The Umfolozi game reserve in particular has been celebrated as the royal hunting ground and game reserve of Shaka who has, in addition, been portrayed as being, in

some sense, a conservationist. These ideas are not merely constructions for the benefit of tourists but also have continuing significance for conservation workers (Brooks, 2000). The reasons behind this romanticisation of the past are clearly complex; nevertheless, it serves to inform conceptions of the 'bush' and wild animals that reinforce idealistic and romantic conceptions of the past. Moreover, it promotes notions of game and 'bush' as existing in a virtually untouched, paradisaal wilderness independent of time, space and modern culture.

The trope of paradise, as it appears in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' tourist brochures, offers a sanitised, unreal representation of reality. This process works through longstanding, often taken-for-granted assumptions about the 'nature of Africa' as a rural, stunted continent. As such, images of natural landscapes, the Drakensberg Mountains, bush biomes and wildlife all collaborate in developing an image of virgin paradise dating back to the attitudes complicit in the colonial encounter which ignored past histories of settlement. The outcome of such strategies exacerbates and entrenches notions about Africa inherited from colonialism. The city is explicitly not a part of this rural, paradisaal landscape. Yet, since it exists, it must be coerced into fitting into the dominant tropes of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign as discussed later in the chapter. This is likewise the case with the trope of adventure, discussed below.

Adventure

"True life adventures abound in the Kingdom offering year round adrenaline flow activity" (KZNTA, 2002v).

Adventure as a trope is key to the marketing of the province. Indeed, the KZNTA produces two brochures, the 'Kingdom of Adventure' guides, which highlight the main adventure activities offered in KwaZulu-Natal (KZNTA, 2002n, n.d.a). According to the tourism authority, the "Zulu Kingdom is well suited to outdoor, adventure holidays thanks to a warm and sunny climate and a great diversity of natural resources" (KZNTA, n.d.a:1). The tourist is actively encouraged to: "Set off and discover a treasure trove of exciting activities available within the Kingdom of the Zulu" (KZNTA, 2002n:3). The tourist is told that it "all happens in The Kingdom of the Zulu – a kingdom of adventure" (KZNTA, 2002n:3). While sporting and outdoor activities are also promoted under the banner of adventure, here attention is concentrated on the 'adventures' available through battlefield and wildlife tourism.

Crucial to marketing representations of KwaZulu-Natal as a tourism destination are the adventure images created around its battlefields. In this regard, the brochures proclaim that the tourist is “in for the adventure of the Battlefields where Boer fought British who fought Zulu” (KZNTA, 2002n:9). This is where, apparently, “the present meets the past in an African landscape” (KZNTA, 2002/3). The tourism authority's brochures explain:

The Battlefields is an area of broad, rolling hills and valleys set against the backdrop of the Drakensberg Mountains. A century ago this region was the scene of a series of bloody battles, fought between British, Boer and Zulu forces; that shaped the history of the African sub-continent. Spioenkop, Blood River, Majuba, Rorke's Drift and Isandlwana are among the best known battle sites in southern Africa, attracting visitors from all over the world. Knowledgeable local guides will show you the sites and recount tales of epic battles, bravery and betrayal (KZNTA, n.d.a:20).

Or, in another similar version:

The central and northern part of the Kingdom of the Zulu is a land of great natural beauty that masks a turbulent history. For a 70-year period starting in the late 1880s this peaceful country was the scene of a series of bloody battles between British forces, Boer commandos and great Zulu armies that shaped the history of southern Africa (KZNTA, 2002/3:63).

These two narratives present a romantic history. Evocatively, the tourist is invited to the site where “one historical drama after another unfolded against the canvas of the African veld and the majestic Drakensberg mountains” (KZNTA, n.d.b:1). History is used to invoke powerful and particular connections to the past. According to Guy (1998:157), history is vitally important in heightening nostalgia which “can be used as a balm to the abrasions of contemporary existence”. Thus, the battlefields are offered for consumption by the tourist with very little explanation as to why the various wars were actually fought. Furthermore, little effort is made in the promotional brochures to offer visitors critical perspectives of the wars' consequences. In a sense,

imperial memories have articulated with market forces in South Africa, and in doing so work towards the perpetuation of a weak, uncritical, misleading historiography unable to challenge colonial customs and imperial traditions which market opportunities have revived (Guy, 1998:159).

The portrayal of glorified battle landscapes is thus in fact a highly partial, irresponsible, and uncritical representation of a selection of imperial memories which does little to support real understanding and knowledge of historical events. Thus, even at historical sites, tourists are offered well-managed imaginative landscapes and, it seems, there is little knowledge or recognition of the battlefield's promotion as being one version of a socially constructed narrative (In popular narratives, this is being challenged – see [Gowans, 2002]).

At present, the battlefield tourist is encouraged merely to perpetuate colonial activities and endeavours. The battlefield tourist is metaphorically encouraged to participate in actual and imaginative activities which reposition warfare as adventure, and the battle landscape as a site for personal conquest. Brochures urge tourists to treat their “battlefields getaway as a self-drive *adventure*. Armed with informative *maps* and brochures...you are free to embark on a personal *exploration*” (Uthukela Regional Council & Umzinyathi Regional Council, 2001, emphasis added). The battle landscape is offered up for exploration and conquering. Maps and brochures (which are far from presenting objective reality – see Harley [1992, 1988]) provide the tools for arming the tourist for his or her expedition (see KZNTA, 2003/2004, n.d.b). Thus, representations of battlefields uphold colonial discourses of conquest.

This critical understanding is far from being appreciated by those in charge of publicising the battlefields. Thus, glamour, tragedy and adventure are the recurrent promotional conventions – not surprisingly given the widespread perception “that these scenes of past slaughter have the potential to make money...to attract visitors...and create financial opportunities for those well placed in the tourist industry” (Guy, 1998:165). Hence, presentations of the battlefields, like most tourist endeavours, are designed to extract money from the visitor rather than present accurate, investigative accounts into the actual reasons behind the wars and their lasting consequences.⁵ As a result, “adventures in Africa approach can be revived without qualms” (Guy, 1998:165). However, this ‘adventures in Africa’ approach creates a situation of dependency where external visitors bring currency into a depressed region. This monetary dependency is closely linked to dependencies which were created by the eventual annihilation of the ‘Zulu’ nation as a powerful seat of authority in KwaZulu-Natal by the British in the

⁵ Brief, uncomplicated narratives of the various battles are provided in (KZNTA, n.d.b).

nineteenth century. Notwithstanding this, the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign endorses and promotes the battlefields as a landscape of excitement and adventure.

Battlefield tourism is not the only tourism activity promoted by the provincial tourism authority through the trope of adventure. In the 'Kingdom of the Zulu', the tourist is encouraged that "on foot or horseback...by canoe or 4x4...unforgettable adventures beckon with open arms" (KZNTA, 2001e:1). Exhilarating impetuses to tourist action are publicity images of wildlife: "watching the giant predators at a vulture restaurant...or game spotting elephant and white rhino...there is a wildlife experience to capture your imagination" (Uthukela Regional Council & Umzinyathi Regional Council, 2001:39). The word 'captured' is crucial in this context; as, the object of these 'adventure safaris' is to capture images of game on film, like the photograph of the rhinoceros in Figure 5.3. In effect, these activities are the contemporary, politically-correct equivalent of the hunt. As the brochures proclaim: "It's still possible to come face-to-face with magnificent creatures of the wild...for hardy adventurers, the challenges of nature await in all their pristine glory" (KZNTA, 2001d:1)



Figure 5.3:
Captured on
Film (KZNTA,
2002y)

Tourists are invited to "shoot with a camera" (KZNTA, 2002h:35) and are now encouraged to come armed with cameras (rather than guns) seeking to capture their piece of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' "to adorn their walls like animal trophies" (Rassool & Witz, 1996:352). Thus 'the shoot' becomes the central experience around which the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' markets its wildlife. KwaZulu-Natal game areas have become "a world of images, selling themselves through carefully selected animal shots and inviting tourists to recreate these images with their own cameras" (Rassool & Witz, 1996:352). Thus, cynically, Rassool and Witz (1996:353) comment that "in the tracks of his ancestor, who roamed the African bush, gun in hand, as virile hunter and colonial predator, the tourist now penetrates the landscape" in the hope of recreating the elusive image that he saw in a tourist brochure somewhere. Nevertheless, even this milder activity is still represented as entailing hardship and courage, a strategy of representation which panders to the tourists' self-image and intersects with the tourism industry's increasing desire to 'tailor-make' special package tours. Thus, even if the 'safari adventure' is relatively tame in comparison with earlier colonial expeditions that warranted the name 'safari', this experience is positioned by the KZNTA as one which

might appeal to thrill-seekers as well as to nature buffs. This is the new “colonial safari” (Rassool & Witz, 1996:353) – the new ‘action’ adventure that visitors to KwaZulu-Natal are invited to enjoy. Yet this image is already shot through with a problematic, colonial history in that it draws on many-layered codes of the white male, colonialist encounter with Africa.

Consequently, representations of wildlife and battlescapes that invoke feelings of adventure perpetuate colonial practises and discourses. Within the discourses of tourism marketing however, it is clearly not expected that history will be critically represented. Instead, the promotional material of the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ designates a material reality which is narrowly conceived in terms of niche demographics and desired economic returns. This deflects historical narratives into smaller, more personalised narratives of tourist pleasure.

Indigenous Culture: Aboriginality, Ethnicity and Royalty

Humans are never absent from tourist representations of KwaZulu-Natal but the depictions are not of a growing middle class urban population. Neither do they draw attention to the poor, homeless or street children. In fact, little of day-to-day life is represented. Rather, similarly to the case in Australia which Waitt (1996) has discussed, indigenous people – ‘Zulus’, in the case of KwaZulu-Natal – are represented as a fundamental component of the landscape. Thus, while the landscape is presented as an escape from ‘civilisation,’ the environment is never assumed to be divested of human presence. This is an important distinction. Notwithstanding this, ‘the human’ tends to be depicted through images of indigenous people conducting ‘uncivilised’ or ‘primitive’ lives.

Indigenous ways of life are typically imagined to be shared with ‘wild’ animals. (The juxtaposition of wild animals and indigenous people is constantly featured in the KZNTA’s promotional literature and videos). Waitt and Head (2002:332) contend that “the wild occupies a special position in tourism place marketing” because, as Whatmore and Thorne (1998:435) observe, the wild is “a place without ‘us’, populated by creatures (including surreptitiously, ‘uncivilised’ humans) at once monstrous and wonderful, whose very strangeness gives shape to whatever ‘we’ are claimed to be”. Waitt and Head (2002:332) similarly argue that the wild is understood as an escape (a place without us), “where a pristine, sublime nature can be gazed upon (the beautiful) populated by creatures at once both wonderful and monstrous (the exotic)”. The result, as Norton’s (1996) work on East African tourism suggests, is that photographs of

indigenous peoples slotted alongside those of wildlife present aboriginal populations as “another attraction to be gazed upon, not dissimilar from the wildlife itself” (Norton, 1996:362). In addition, “the need to protect, value and understand the...culture and society is framed as the need to preserve and understand the endangered flora” (Norton, 1996:362). This is clearly evident in the following statement: “In this part of the world the visitor is spoiled for choice – experience first hand the exciting world of Zulu culture, view the Big Five wild animals of Africa and a myriad other species” (KZNTA, n.d.a:22-23). Furthermore, the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ brochures observe that “woven into this exhilarating fabric of nature-at-large [wildlife] are fascinating opportunities to be immersed in vibrant, *living* culture” (KZNTA, 2001e:1).

In a sense, ‘Zulus’ are treated as merely another exotic species in Africa’s zoological wonderland. Certainly, when it comes to representing indigenous culture in the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ promotional literature, it is evident, following Norton (1996) that these derive from a tendency to situate aboriginality and ethnicity within the managing frame of a “a primeval archetype, reproducing a romantic discourse which places the wild animals and primitive cultures in prehistory” (Norton, 1996:355) and out of the contested terrains of the present. It appears that ‘wild creatures’ and ‘primitive natives’ do not disrupt perceived ideals of untouched and primordial wilderness; thus ‘indigenous Zulus’ and the ‘Big Five’ are seen as authentic to the ‘real’ and ‘true’ bush-scapes of KwaZulu-Natal which are such an important component of the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ promotional campaign. As Brooks (2000:67) explains in the context of Zululand: “In addition to wild animals, ‘timeless Zululand’ is predicated on the persistence of an unchanging Zulu culture”. Appeals to timeless, static ‘Zulu’ culture can be easily identified in the KZNTA’s (2002m:1) statement that the “pastoral way of life of today’s rural, Zulu-speaking population harks back to the Early Iron Age people”. Ideas such as these work to reinforce assumptions that Zululand “has no history of civilisation but instead is a land of spectacular natural beauty occupied only by wild animals and savages” (Norton, 1996:366). This specific combination of wild animals and indigenous culture forms a particular “‘out of Africa’ experience” which the KZNTA (n.d.c:12) is keen to promote. Thus, “Like lions, rhinos and elephants, for example, Kenya’s Maasai and South Africa’s Zulu people are valuable components in ‘selling’ their countries” (Bird, 2002:48).

In post-apartheid South Africa, this kind of cultural promotion is incongruous, since it is a “continuation of a cultural politics of domination...based on a

European social construction of ['Zuluness'] dating from the first white colonisers" (Waitt, 1996:7). Yet the commodification of "essentialist images of 'unspoilt' indigenous African cultures to attract an international market to South Africa [has] long been a vital and profitable sector of the local tourist industry" (White, 1995:15). Once again we need to understand that this commodification entails tropes rather than facts: the representations of 'Zuluness' upon which the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign is based are "economically motivated manipulation[s]" (White, 1995:16) in the service of an industry that trades in images in order to generate financial returns. This may seem an obvious point; however, it is one that tends not to be highlighted in the romanticised narratives of 'Zulu' culture that populate the KZNTA's promotional material. If anything, it is actively disguised.

In effect, the commodification of 'Zulu' heritage that occurs in KZNTA publicity material promises to give tourists the key to what they believe is a profoundly timeless, exotic, otherworldly, even heavenly place. It could thus be argued that "stereotyped as a timeless culture, [black Africans] have greatest currency for the tourist industry when positioned as the exotic 'other', apart from civilisation, to help signify an escape to a primeval world" (Waitt & Head, 2002:338). The "amaZulu" are constantly referred to in the tourism material as "the People of Heaven" (KZNTA, 2002l:1). Tourists are alerted to the apparently justificatory argument that the word 'Zulu' can be translated into English as 'heaven'. Tourists are told that during their "stay in the Berg or the Battlefields...you will constantly come into contact with the customs, traditions and culture" of these 'heavenly people' (Uthukela Regional Council & Umzinyathi Regional Council, 2001:18). The heavenly metaphor is sustained throughout the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign with the result that black African people are idealised, removed from contemporary realities (blighted township presence, crime and grime) and made manageable through figurative codes that emphasise the pure, the untainted, the saintly and the angelic. Existing in a timeless framework and operating within an intimate relationship to the land (rendered 'heavenly' through codes of scenic beauty), black Africans are repeatedly represented as being somehow independent of modernity and associated with purity, simplicity and godliness.

The history of the 'Zulu nation' is given some treatment on the KZNTA webpages (see KZNTA, 2002o, 2002p, 2002q). This is more narrative than fact and is presented in a colloquial and romantic manner. There is a gap in the chronology between the creation of the Union of South Africa (in 1910) and the emergence of the new democratic South Africa (in 1994). The effect of this is to sideline contemporary

history at the expense of a romantic past. Someone perusing these webpages would have no knowledge of life from 1910 to the present. This is compounded by a picture of King Goodwill Zwelithini, in traditional headdress with the commentary, "'Reigning monarch'. His Majesty Goodwill Zwelithini, lives in the Nongoma district of central Zululand the home territory almost two centuries ago of those who tried without success to destroy an emerging nation and its first true sovereign Shaka – King of the Zulu" (KZNTA, 2002q:1). This statement raises a number of points. Firstly, many would argue that the 'Zulu nation' was effectively crippled by colonialism and later by apartheid. To be sure, there are numerous isiZulu speakers. But, to suggest that these people form a bounded political entity or ethnicity is not a *fait accompli*. Secondly, the sentence tries to invest King Zwelithini with mythic properties by linking him to Shaka. Intertwining the present with a romantic past invites the assumption that for two centuries, nothing has changed. The impression is created of a continuous link between a static 'Zulu' culture which has its origin with Shaka and has remained unchanged since then. Some political commentary is provided (KZNTA, 2002o); however, it is brief and does not fully interrogate the consequences of racial segregation on the lives of black African people in the province. Certainly, the overwhelming emphasis of the tourist images is that 'Zulus' still largely conduct original, ruralised modes of life that are variously 'quaint' and/or 'underdeveloped'.

Thus, tourists are uncritically encouraged "to experience first hand some of the fascinating aspects of the culture, traditions and daily customs" (KZNTA, 2001a:19) of 'the People of Heaven'. In ersatz cultural villages situated around KwaZulu-Natal tourists are invited to participate in beer brewing, ancestral worship, courtship traditions, witchcraft and burial practices, all of which supposedly allows one "to witness the disciplined and dignified social structure of a Zulu homestead" (KZNTA, 2001a:19). The objective of the promotional literature is to provide an authentic representation of 'Zulu' culture for tourist consumption. Yet, the "notion of authenticity can be seen as a feature of the literature that self-consciously sells a type of reality to tourists" (Macleod, 1997:133). In effect, stereotyped 'Zulus' simply provide a recreated backdrop for the tourist's fun (Dann, 1996). Regardless of the poverty, political instability and general hardships of daily life, 'Zulus' are depicted as divorced from material life and concerns. In search of 'authentic' culture, the cultural representation of 'Zulus' in the tourist literature belies the historical conditions under which the black Africans have become culturally and economically depressed. Hence, not only from a postcolonial perspective

can these cultural representations be attacked; the state of economic reliance on tourist money perpetuates neocolonial forms of dependence.

Of course black Africans allow themselves to be culturally represented in traditional fashion. However, one should recognise that contemporary black African identity is created and established in reaction to experiences of dispossession and “as a strategic response to opportunities of patronage based on the global interest in images of the ‘traditional’” (White, 1995:viii). Undeniably, allowing certain representations of one’s self to exist is a form of agency. However, these choices are seldom free; in reality, the choice is often mediated by material limitations such as poverty. In this context, therefore, it is not accurate to speak about *de facto* human agency; at issue, rather, are neocolonial conditions of economic and cultural dependency. Similar arguments can be used to counter suggestions that staged ethnicity has a valid historical and cultural purpose for particular ‘presenters’ and ‘audiences’. This form of value is impossible until presenters control, manage and circulate their own self-representations.

The Zulu monarchy is invoked constantly in a manner which contributes to neocolonial economic and cultural dependencies. An important component of the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ brand is ‘Zulu’ royalty. This component is one of the most clearly visible features of the KZNTA’s marketing strategy. After all, the campaign is branded the ‘*Kingdom of the Zulu*’. Ostensibly, this name is derived from the fact that the province has a living monarchy and a King and the brochures urge: “Come to the Zulu Kingdom, and enjoy a truly Royal experience” (KZNTA, n.d.a:1). In effect, the KZNTA tie into broader, world-wide marketing strategies which attempt to capitalise on the tried and tested tactic of enhancing the tourist appeal of a destination by publicising the glamour, pomp, ceremony and personality of the country’s monarchy.⁶ Furthermore, the Zulu monarchy’s authority is represented as a predominantly accepted political and cultural force. The observation is made that KwaZulu-Natal “is a royal land, a Kingdom to be sure, a dynasty that has sovereignty over its people” (KZNTA, 2002v). This depiction ignores the contested reality of identity politics in KwaZulu-Natal. Indeed, many would take issue with the assertion that King Zwelithini is their sovereign (Burrows, 2005; *Daily*

⁶ Interestingly, Queen Elizabeth II of England is featured twice on the KZNTA’s (2002v) promotional video and King Zwelithini only once. This suggests the primacy of the colonially invested Queen over her ‘Zulu’ counterpart even though the entire video tries to make the assertion that the opposite is true.

News, 2005; Khumalo, 2005a, 2005b, 2005c, 2005d, 2005e, 2005f; *The Mercury*, 2005b, 2005c).

For the most part, 'Zulu' royalty is not represented in historicised form; instead, it is repeatedly invoked through romanticised, exoticised and mythical depictions of Shaka (see Wylie, 2006, 2000; Hamilton, 1998, 1993). For example, in one place in the promotional literature, Shaka is romanticised as "Africa's Black Napoleon" (KZNTA, 2002o:1).⁷ The name Shaka is likely to be familiar to a range of tourists through media as diverse as radio, film, television, textbooks and the Internet (Wylie, 2000; Hamilton, 1998). Consequently, the image of Shaka is constantly exploited from the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' logo onwards. During the KZNTA's (2002v, 2002w) promotional videos, images from the controversial and contested but internationally popular 1986 television series *Shaka Zulu* are flashed upon the screen (see Hamilton [1998, 1993] for an analysis of the series). One scene in both KZNTA videos depicts Shaka ceding possession of Port Natal to Farewell (Its inclusion highlights the colonial values which underpin the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign). In addition, if one is placed on hold when telephoning the KZNTA, the series' popular theme song provides the requisite muzak. The prominence given to *Shaka Zulu* highlights the ease with which the KZNTA draws on popular representations and conceptions of Shaka in order to promote the province instead of exploring contemporary African culture.

Thus, connecting any aspect with Shaka is bound to create an interest in it. Even the dolphins of KwaZulu-Natal's North Coast are promoted as "Shaka Zulu's dolphins" (KZNTA, 2001c:1). The extract below displays the romance and lyricism with which the image of Shaka is idealised:

This is Ilembé territory in praise of wise and courageous King Shaka where the 19th century monarch consolidated his Zulu empire, and handmaidens of the royal household gathered salt from tidal pools while delighting at the spectacle of two hundred bottle-nose dolphins gambolling and feeding in the shallows (KZNTA, 2001c:1).

The rhetoric hopes to create a number of perceptions in the tourist's mind. Firstly, it seeks to equate Shaka with dolphins, endowing him with the 'gentle', 'gracious' and 'inspiring' characteristics popularly attributed to the dolphin. At the same time, the monarch is lauded as a powerful military strategist. Secondly, the paragraph presents

⁷ Wylie (2000) provides a detailed analysis of this particular comparison.

KwaZulu-Natal as a natural paradise under the equally natural, genial guardianship of Shaka; and thirdly, it presents the 'Zulu nation' as a benign patriarchy whose legitimate custodian is, naturally, Shaka. Clearly, conceptions and romanticisations of Shaka, royalty and KwaZulu-Natal are intricately complex. For the current purposes, suffice to say that in the KZNTA 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign, extremely partial (even biased) images of royalty and Shaka continue to be used to support forms of thinking and behaviour that are at best uncritical and at worst stereotypical in the fashion of the naturalised racism of colonialism.

Instead of promoting realistic and accurate portrayals of contemporary African life, images of aboriginality, ethnicity and royalty serve to reinforce colonial perceptions that the land is peopled by 'primitives' living in a paradisaal setting. Moreover, this image of paradise subtly and subconsciously invokes a sense of adventure for as Adam and Eve discover, the Garden of Eden can never be isolated from its nemesis – adventure which goads its inhabitants to gamble with forbidden fruits. These representations are not culturally responsible. They foster unrealistic expectations of 'Zuluness' in the tourist imagination which can only conflict with present day black African identity.

Interestingly, Coleman (Interview, 2004) observes that culture is living, vibrant and not contained in history. He acknowledges that the KZNTA does not reflect living culture adequately and that this needs to be addressed. He admits that it is the task of the KZNTA to redefine what 'Zulu' means for the average leisure tourist. On the other hand, he allows that the marketing campaign reinforces traditional values up to a point but excuses this by observing that there are consumers who want this. He justifies the position of the KZNTA by observing that they do not have the freedom or flexibility to create a new tourism brand. He observes that a shift away from the conservative marketing of culture is necessary but at the same time it would be highly difficult to abandon all ties from a branding point of view. He concedes that in many places in the world the perception exists that anyone from Africa is a Zulu and comments that it is this misunderstanding and misrepresentation that the KZNTA are attempting to take advantage of. Coleman (Interview, 2004) is obviously conflicted over the presentation of indigenous culture and it is positive that some consideration of these issues is taking place. However, other efforts, such as those illustrated in Part IV, indicate that it is indeed possible to create successful alternatives to representations based on stunted colonial tropes. With the financial backing available to the KZNTA, surely efforts could be

more effectively translated into a successful tourism package that does not rely on stereotypes and colonial imperatives.

Admittedly, various other bodies besides the KZNTA are keen to capitalise on supposedly authentic, indigenous figures of 'Zuluness'. These include the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), as well as writers/ theatre producers such as Mbongeni Ngema in 'Zulu' and Edmund Mhlongo in 'Bayede-Shaka: The Spear is Born'. Yet even these attempts to claim 'Zuluness' may be used to reinforce the point about the narrowness and idealisation which mark the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. The campaign has been conceptualised and organised as if it alone encapsulates 'the cultural truth' about the province; as if 'Zuluness' were somehow the natural category into which the province's tourism marketing should be positioned. Thus, there has been a failure to accommodate the fact that contemporary 'Zulu' identity is highly contested and repeatedly struggled over; it is not easily reduced to the iconographic image radiating its allure across a lush, rolling landscape, as occurs in the campaign logo.

'Kingdom of the Zulu' constructions "reiterate, reinforce, amplify, and communicate the familiar 19th-century colonial stereotyped representations" (Waitt & Head; 2002:337). Waitt and Head (2002:337) argue that the tourism industry sustains 'othering' images of essentialised ethnicity "because, when understood as the antithesis of what urban societies value as 'modern' environments, this construction of ['Zulu'] culture still has considerable potency". Additionally, "within its romantic version of primitivism the tourism industry offers spiritual truths and mystical connections to the land taken away from tourists by the material pleasures of cities" (Waitt & Head, 2002:337). Similarly to the situation in Australia, there is only one dominant understanding and representation of 'Zuluness' depicted in the promotional literature of the KZNTA: that invented by Europeans. Promotional materials, as designed and effected by the KZNTA, are forms of oppression and have neocolonial affects. Stereotypes, produced by the provincial tourism authority about KwaZulu-Natal could also affect policymakers' decisions regarding the area (Waitt & Head, 2002).

Black African tourists are completely absent from the promotional literature.⁸ Tourists represented in the brochures are mostly white – see Figure 5.4. On the one hand, this is surprising, since visitors from KwaZulu-Natal constitute the

⁸ See Dann (1996) for an interesting quantitative and qualitative analysis of the people featured in tourist brochures.

KZNTA's second most important source market and the majority of the inhabitants of KwaZulu-Natal are black African. On the other hand, though, the narrow representations of black African people attest to the tenacity of naturalised tourist associations of wildlife



Figure 5.4: Image of White Tourists (KZNTA, 2002y)



Figure 5.5: Image of Black African Male as Object of Tourist Gaze (KZNTA, 2002y)

and primitive peoples. The preferred space for black people in the promotional literature is not as visitor or tourist; black African people generally figure solely as the object of the tourist gaze (dressed in traditional costume – see Figure 5.5) or as service providers (chefs, hotel staff, shop owners).

South Africa's tourist industry was historically created "for the white elite" (Honey, 1999:348). Currently, there is debate regarding the extent to which contemporary black African tourists

are making use of tourist facilities in post-apartheid South Africa. Ndebele (1998) observes the number of black African tourists visiting game lodges is on the increase; however, he suggests that these visits are tempered by profound ambiguities given the structure of the game experience within the logic of colonialism. Ironically, despite the scarcity of black African tourists in KZNTA's tourism literature, the marketing team responsible for the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign attest that black African tourists have substantially increased in post-apartheid South Africa (Anonymous Informant Interview, 2001). Perhaps, but this trend is not even vaguely reflected in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' promotional brochures and Internet pages. Thus, it is discernible that black African tourists are not being targeted by the visible advertising of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. In fact, while they may have begun to exist in demographic data, urbanised, black African tourists are ignored. The only way that they fit into the constructed representations of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture are as members of these categories. As Ndebele (1998:121) observes: "Especially when [black African tourists] go game viewing. It is difficult not to feel that, in the total scheme of things, perhaps they should be out there with the animals, being viewed".

Representations of indigenous culture, in addition to those of adventure and paradise work in unison to create the impression of KwaZulu-Natal as a rural

destination. However, Durban, as a major centre in the province, cannot be ignored by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. As will be made explicit in the remainder of this chapter, Durban's inclusion in the campaign is effected by manipulating representations of Durban to fit within the tropes of adventure, indigenous culture and paradise by positioning Durban as the gateway to a rural destination. In many ways, Durban's presentation becomes shaded by the campaign's larger rural affiliations in a manner which effectively conceals its urban identity.

Durban: The Gateway to the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'

"Durban Metro is the vibrant, cosmopolitan, sophisticated gateway to...unsurpassed delights...If South Africa is the 'world in one country' and our Kingdom of the Zulu 'Africa in one province'...then Durban Metro is without a doubt the 'Zulu Kingdom in one, vast and glorious uni-city', and we all look forward to sharing with you this truly African experience" (KZNTA, 2002s:2).

Durban's identity as a city is inextricably intertwined with rural codes made prevalent by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' marketing campaign. Indeed, Durban and the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign are intimately connected. No less than the Mayor of Durban himself has said: "The glorious Kingdom of the Zulu beckons you to the Celebrate Durban festival" (eThekweni Municipality, 2002a). Why, considering the subject of the festival, did the (D)urban site not beckon enticingly? Why was the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' – a rural, discursive construction of the province of KwaZulu-Natal – appealed to instead? In some senses, it appears that Durban's officially projected identity is wrapped in rural codes. For the Mayor to invoke a regional, predominantly rural discursive location in the context of a specifically urban event is indicative of the extent to which the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' ideologies have inserted themselves into Durban's identity. Coleman (Interview, 2004) asserts that the KZNTA does not have a major impact on identity in Durban. He contends that the job of the tourism authority is to reflect rather than represent identity. However, it is impossible to simply dismiss the impact of their 'reflections'.

Durban is certainly of prime importance to the KZNTA. The KZNTA (2002b:2) is firmly aware that "Durban, as a core tourism node, also needs to position itself in synergy with and empathetically to the Kingdom of the Zulu". Crucially cognisant of the fact that Durban is the "economic powerhouse of our Zulu Kingdom" (KZNTA, 2002i:1), the KZNTA realises the centrality of the city to the province of KwaZulu-Natal.

After all, in a province of 8.4 million people in 2000, functional urbanisation is equal to approximately 43% (KZNTA, 2001b). Durban “is the largest city in the Kingdom of the Zulu and an important economic hub built around the busiest port in the southern hemisphere” (KZNTA, 2002l:4). As such, in the opinion of the KZNTA (2002/3:10), “Durban serves as the natural gateway to the Kingdom of the Zulu and to southern Africa”. After all, “Durban Metro is where the proud Zulu nation meets East and West” (KZNTA, 2002h:1). The KZNTA (2002h:1) observe:

Our Kingdom of the Zulu is a holiday destination quite unlike any other...its Durban Metro a gateway equally unique. We look forward to introducing you to this vast array of thrilling adventures...beginning with the charismatic, multi-faceted and progressive city the Zulu people know as Thekweni.

As the earlier statistics pointed out, Durban receives a large proportion of the province’s visitors. Durban is an important tourism gateway. In fact, in many respects, it is more than a gateway and perhaps can be seen as a pivotal hub. This is easily acknowledged: “Durban is the Province’s biggest attraction...Durban visitors tend to be skewed towards the 16-24 age group” (KZNTA, 2002x:14). As such, to the KZNTA, Durban is “Absolutely essential! It’s a critical, critical element!” (Seymour Interview, 2002). Coleman (Interview, 2004) agrees that Durban is fundamental as a gateway and observes that it is the start and end point of most travel in the province. As such, it is a clear magnet to the province. Icons of Durban, like the ‘Golden Mile’ stretch of beach and rickshaws, are used to represent the province. Often KwaZulu-Natal is perceived to be Durban, and its icons are perceived to be that of KwaZulu-Natal (Seymour Interview, 2002). This link is compounded with advertising such as that found in the South African Airways complimentary in-flight magazine where ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ advertisements, frequently rural in emphasis, are placed on the facing page of a feature called Durban Diary (see Reynolds, 2002:12). Image confusion between Durban and KwaZulu-Natal is an issue that needs to be addressed (KZNTA, 2000-2003). Nevertheless, Durban is a critical element of the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ and plays a crucial role in the campaign. Durban is intricately aligned with the concept of the ‘Zulu Kingdom’ and its identity is closely created around the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ (Seymour Interview, 2002).

Among its aims for Durban, the KZNTA wishes to “improve the number and quality of Indaba [Africa’s premier international tourism show, held in Durban] delegates and to improve these delegates’ tourism experience in Durban, the province and South Africa” (KZNTA, 2002b:3). Furthermore, the KZNTA seeks to “communicate

with delegates attending international conferences in Durban and elsewhere in the province" (KZNTA, 2002b:3). Thus the KZNTA has a strong working relationship with Durban's International Convention Centre (ICC). The tourism authority aims to try and increase "the number of foreign tourists who arrive in South Africa through Durban International Airport" or alternatively to attract "greater numbers of foreign tourists to travel to KwaZulu-Natal through Durban International Airport, even if they initially arrived at Johannesburg or Cape Town International Airports" (KZNTA, 2002b:3). Additionally, the KZNTA works closely with *Getaway* magazine and East Coast Radio (radio station based in Durban) "to develop the Getaway Show in Durban as the province's major tourism consumer show, and as South Africa's premier domestic consumer show" (KZNTA, 2002b:3).

Like the other 'Kingdom of the Zulu' destinations, the KZNTA projects a particular image-based identity of Durban. In its Corporate Branding Guidelines, the KZNTA juxtaposes two images (ironically both of poor quality) in order to illustrate what kind of pictorial images are suitable in their campaign (KZNTA, 2002d). The KZNTA (2002d:3) "aim to make use of pictorial imagery, which represents scenes in a simplistic manner". Thus one image displays two sets of white feet in the



Figure 5.6: 'Right' Kind of Image (KZNTA, 2002d)

foreground, a wide water expanse and big yellow striped umbrella in the middle ground and some kind of mountain in the background (see Figure 5.6). Next to this image, the KZNTA (2002d:3) have pasted the word 'right'. Another picture shows a stream of cars on the freeway with their headlights on (see Figure 5.7). This picture is labelled 'wrong' (KZNTA, 2002d:3). Therefore, 'right' images are those divested from the busy stream of life. It appears that reality is eschewed for tranquil images divested of any token of resemblance to daily lived existence. This is arguably symptomatic of broader imagery concerns which shy away from representing the urban in its multi-dynamic format and sidelines city-life in a celebration of (mostly rural) tranquil relaxation.

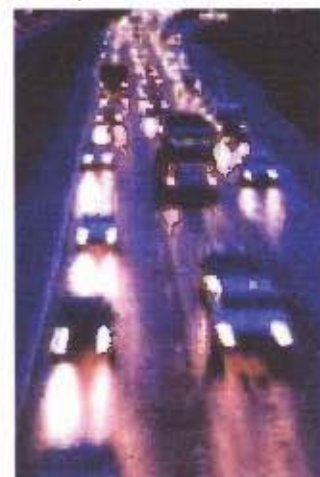


Figure 5.7: 'Wrong' Kind of Image (KZNTA, 2002d)

Images presented of Durban are part of a clearly defined branding strategy for the city. The KZNTA (together with the Development Bank of South Africa) appointed the Deloitte and Touche Consortium “to facilitate the development of a plan and strategy for tourism product development in KwaZulu-Natal to ensure its global competitiveness” (KZNTA, 2002e:1). Based on these recommendations, The KZNTA has adopted a five-year product development plan which prioritises the development of coastal destinations. In addition, the plan recommends that attention should be given to including elements of ‘Zuluness’ within coastal destinations.

Durban is seen as a major coastal destination and is seen to have a special “ability to create its own image/ branding within the overall context of the Kingdom of the Zulu” (KZNTA, 2002f:2). According to the KZNTA (2002f:4), tourists visiting coastal destinations like Durban “also need to be offered unique additional activities associated with wildlife, heritage and culture, when viewed within the African context”. This statement is crucial in understanding Durban’s attempt to position itself within the wider ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ campaign. The KZNTA believes that Durban needs to capitalise on wildlife and indigenous culture in addition to the adventure nature of coastal sports activities. In terms of the provincial marketing strategy, Durban thus has to position itself in accordance with the tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture which are characteristic of the larger, predominantly rural, campaign. Accordingly, the main attractions in the city are grouped under the headings: Natural/ Wildlife attractions or experiences, Cultural/ Historical attractions or experiences and Other Attractions which encompass animal farms, aquariums, boat charters, casinos, markets, snake and bird parks, zoos and steam and mini trains – all adventurous activities (KZNTA, 2002f).

Adventure, Paradise and Indigenous Culture in the City

Adventure tourism is keenly promoted in Durban. The promotional literature informs the visitor that whether they “arrive by bus, car, ship or via Durban International Airport, there is a big adventure in store for you” (KZNTA, n.d.c:4). The city is said to have “a calendar filled with thrilling, spectacular events” (KZNTA, 2002h:1). Accordingly: “Yachting, boating and cruise tourism, together with related water sports and other activities, are significant opportunities that appear to be underestimated within Durban” (KZNTA, 2002f:6). Accordingly, the KZNTA (2002f:6) wish to capitalise on Durban’s potential to become “the ‘southern anchor’ marina for the East African

Seaboard". The KZNTA remarks that Durban is "sports-crazy and equipped for it" (KZNTA, 2002h:1). The official tourism guides adds that "the city is home to one of the world's most famous rugby teams, the Sharks, and hosts international rugby, cricket, golf and football matches" (KZNTA, 2002/3:10).⁹ Adventure is crucial to imagining the city as a fun-filled, adrenaline pumping location. Adventure is offered as a largely unproblematic leisure activity. Not unlike nineteenth century invitations to the colonial frontier, the space of Durban is uncritically made available to foreigners as the site where they can enact and live their adventure fantasies.

As with adventure, the tropes of paradise and indigenous culture as they exist in tandem with the larger 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign – where both the "splendours of nature, [and] unique cultural experiences" (KZNTA, 2002i:1) await visitors – are also incorporated into Durban's marketing strategy. With regard to the paradisaal trope, Durban is frequently presented as a "Gateway City in A Sub Tropical Paradise" (KZNTA, 2002j:10). Accordingly, representations of Durban by the KZNTA are weighted away from urban images towards images which convey a "warm, sub-tropical climate with plenty of sunshine all year round and an abundance of golden beaches" (KZNTA, n.d.c:4). Durban, the KZNTA (2002h:1) purports, "has from its earliest days possessed a special charm...a certain mystique that adds 'something extra' to the meeting of warm Indian Ocean, radiant golden sands and lush sub-tropical greenery". Moreover, the natural environment is personified – "our sea has *rhythm*" (KZNTA, 2002i:1) – in order to drum home the notion that Durban is an Eden-like, "ideal destination" (KZNTA, n.d.c:4).

The paradisaal notion of Durban is socially constructed. The promotional literature subtly alludes to this construction in its observation: "The creation of Durban Metro beckons visitors to this sublime paradise" (KZNTA, 2002h:1). However, this 'creation of Durban' is not new; rather it mimics earlier Durban constructions. Here, it is apposite to revisit Russell's (1899:220) comments, highlighted in the previous chapter, detailing the desire of the 1855 Burgesses to fashion the emerging space of Durban as their "properly constituted Paradise". It appears that the colonially inherited idea of the Durban area supporting a virgin paradisaal landscape open for trade or leisure has been continued to the present where it is promised that Durban offers a unique "lifestyle in subtropical paradise" (KZNTA, 2002i:1). The reiteration of the colonial trope of paradise

⁹ Despite the linguistic precedence granted to rugby, one should note that in South Africa "no sport has been watched, played, and discussed more than football" (Alegi, 2004:1). Emphasis is

indicates the contemporary appropriation of a colonial mentality. It further illustrates the manner in which colonial attitudes and values are re-inscribed and in the process work to hide past and present creolisations.

Durban is thus depicted as a 'natural' paradise in a manner which divorces it from its immediate urban context. It is for this reason that the KZNTA (n.d.c:4) is keen to point out that Durban contains "well over 45000 ha of natural parks within the city limits". The tourist is thus invited to visit "beautiful, lush parks including the Botanic Gardens, oldest surviving park in Africa, founded in 1849" (KZNTA, n.d.c:4). Green spaces and beaches are highlighted – suggesting these comprise the majority of Durban's space. It is further argued that the majority of Durban's tourists "cannot travel northwards to enjoy the Game Reserves and Zululand areas" (KZNTA, 2002f:6) as a result of limited time and/or the cost of such trips. This is justification for providing "such facilities within closer proximity to the Durban Beachfront" (KZNTA, 2002f:6). Thus, the visitor is told that the KZNTA has "brought to your holiday doorstep the magnificent environment and cultural wonders of the Valley of a Thousand Hills, long and tranquil beaches of The South and up-market ambience of the historic and culturally rich Sugar Coast" (KZNTA, 2002h:1). Paradise, adventure and indigenous culture are thus made available in the space of Durban for tourist convenience. It is easy to see how the broader marketing imperatives of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign become concentrated in the space of Durban. Again and again, indigenous culture and wildlife are offered to the public in the same undifferentiated breath. Culture, paradisaal settings and wildlife are all mixed together and offered to the potential Durban tourist under the guise of "Secondary Attraction and Visitor Facilities within the Heritage and Culture and Wildlife sectors" (KZNTA, 2002f:6).

Culture, especially indigenous culture is a crucial element of Durban's depiction. Traditional 'Zulu' warrior dances are often showcased as an example of Durban's cultural wealth. Moreover, cultural villages, located in the city, are actively promoted. Nevertheless, Durban is also, to a superficial extent, represented as an exotic melting pot of culture and as a "bustling multicultural city" (KZNTA, 2002n:27). Durban is said to be infused with "a wealth of influences to entertain and enthrall with traditional warrior dances, mystic fire-walkers and colonial heritage. Sample the unique vibrancy of township life, the finest curries outside India" (KZNTA, 2002h:1). However, difference is

given to the Sharks on account of their close marketing partnership with the KZNTA.

presented in essentialised terms. This attention to difference is superficial in that while mention is made of other cultures, 'Zulu' culture always remains centre stage. This is evidenced by the linguistic priority always given to mentions of 'Zuluness' as evident in the following quote: "Durban, named eThekweni by the Zulu – is an exciting, multi-cultural city where East meets West meets Africa in a colourful and unique mix" (KZNTA, 2002l:4). Or more overtly in this quote: "Welcome, then, to our Kingdom where East meets West in the palm of the proud Zulu people" (KZNTA, 2002o:1). Simply and ultimately, the KZNTA attempts to present Durban as the "Zulu Kingdom in one, vast and glorious uni-city" (KZNTA, 2002s:2). Durban is meant to be a "truly African experience" (KZNTA, 2002s:2). However, this is largely an experience which is narrowly centred on particular, stunted and exotic conceptions of both 'Zuluness' and Africanity as prevalent in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign as a whole.

Some elements of contemporary urban culture are offered for tourism consumption in the form of township tourism. Township life is offered to the tourist in commodified format. The KZNTA (2002m) produces a guide to township and cultural tourism in KwaZulu-Natal. Certainly, as pointed out in Chapter 2, township tours negotiate tourist expectations of being exposed both to township life and 'natural' Africa. In this regard, according to the KZNTA (2002m:2),

Township tours, in Durban and throughout the Kingdom of the Zulu, are an exciting way to meet local people, experience the pulse of life in an African community and explore the fascinating social and political history of these townships that helped shape the history of KwaZulu-Natal.

As pointed out previously, township life is easily reconfigured and offered to tourists as a narrative of creativity, vitality and resilience. Accordingly, the KZNTA (2002m:2) asks, "What better way to embrace the cultural heritage of the Kingdom of the Zulu than to immerse yourself in the colourful, community-driven life of the province's townships?". Township tours, in the vein promoted by the KZNTA, appeal to both township exotica: "Visit the popular 'shebeens' or taverns where people meet to relax and share a drink and exchange news and views with locals while enjoying the lively music of urban black South Africans" (KZNTA, 2002m:3) and offer political commentary:

Townships were originally established as dormitory suburbs for black labourers who came to the cities and towns from rural areas. A legacy of underdevelopment during the apartheid era meant that few townships had decent

infrastructure or reliable essential services, deprivations that ironically seemed to fuel the vibrancy of township life (KZNTA, 2002m:2-3).

Hostels also receive a somewhat sanitised treatment in the promotional literature. These dwellings, provide tourists, according to the KZNTA (2002m:4), with a fascinating excursion “with uniquely local vibe and flavour”. These accounts ignore the tumultuous history that these sites have contributed to in the context of apartheid in the urban environment.

KZNTA’s marketing of Durban is not totally without merit. In their more detailed web pages on Durban, more attention is given to diverse attractions and their values (see KZNTA, 2002r, 2002s, 2002t, 2002u). Two major exceptions to the general sanitising trend of the KZNTA is their promotion of the KwaMuhle museum (which presents material about the segregation laws under apartheid) and the Durban Cultural and Document Centre (which traces the cultural and historical development of Indian South Africans). Even here though, the rhetoric of KZNTA is not entirely absent. Mention is made that KwaMuhle is housed “in a splendid colonial building” (KZNTA, 2002m:7), underscoring the worth still ascribed to colonial aesthetics and values. Additionally, the Durban Cultural and Documentation Centre is said to hold “exotic” (KZNTA, 2002m:7) artefacts further entrenching the idea that Indians are synonymous with exotica since they originate in the East.¹⁰

The notion equating Indians with exotica is fully developed in the KZNTA’s literature. (Exoticising ‘Indianness’ is similar to exoticising ‘Zuluness’ – both strategies serve to idealise and romanticise essential versions of culture). At the Victoria Street Market, one is said to be able to “draw inspiration from the heady aromas of soaps and sweet smelling incense mingled with curries, spices and the exotic odours of the fish market next door” (KZNTA, 2002m:12). While exotica are often referred to in connection to Indian Durbanites, many other things are also given this designation. The products of traditional healers are referred to as “exotic collections of medicinal plants” (KZNTA, 2002m:12). Thus, Warwick Junction¹¹ in Durban is presented as “the site of the ‘muthi’ market with traditional healers selling fascinating mixtures of indigenous herbs,

¹⁰ Thus far there is a real silence about whites and Indians. This silence is generally guided by the representational strategy of the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ campaign itself with its emphasis on Zulu ethnicity. However, where they appear, images of whites (as tourists) and Indians (as exotic) are equally limited.

¹¹ Major inner city trading and transportation hub.

plants, bark, snake skins, bird wings, crocodile teeth, dolphin skulls and monkey paws" (KZNTA, 2002m:12). One is continually left with the sense that attractions fall into the marketing conventions of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture (encompassing the exotic).

The KZNTA shows scant attention to the actual history of the presence of black Africans in the space of Durban or to the history of apartheid. Rather, history is subjected to romanticising conventions. Even history as an abstract topic itself is not immune from these conventions. The KZNTA contends that, in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu', "history speaks out at every turn not in prosaic monotones, but [in a] poetic and rainbow-hued language that beckons with the promise of a lifetime's memories of unique adventures amid natural splendour" (KZNTA, 2002o:1). Accordingly, a sepia-toned version of events is presented. Colonialism is depicted as a comforting past history. Proudly, it is emphasised that almost "every street bears the name of an historic figure" (KZNTA, 2002r:1). It is conveniently not mentioned that most of these historic figures are drawn from Durban's colonial and apartheid past. The history of Durban is likewise coloured. Durban, according to the KZNTA (2002i:1),

has exerted a magnetic pull since time immemorial...first attracting San hunter-gatherers of the Stone Age from their icy mountain fastness with the mildest winter imaginable. Iron Age peoples from Central Africa began infiltrating about two thousand years ago...pirates and shipwrecked European explorers of the modern era made temporary homes here during the 1700s...and in 1824, British adventurers deceived King Shaka and raised the Union Jack over this gem of his recently-founded Zulu realm.

This version of events is extremely truncated and infused with sentimentality and marketing bumf. Surprisingly, or maybe not so surprisingly when viewing the campaign as a whole, no mention is made of apartheid whatsoever. Mythic conceptions of Shaka, are however, returned to continually. As seen previously, dolphins have been aligned with Shaka. Even in the urban context, wildlife cannot escape being mythologised in a similar fashion. Thus, the promotional literature explains that the Mkomazi River, Durban's southern boundary, was named the 'Place of the Whales' by Shaka (KZNTA, 2002i). In addition, the tourist to Durban is invited to stay in "meticulously maintained colonial-style tourist accommodation" (KZNTA, 2002i:1). Thus, the tourist is invited to participate neocolonially in Durban as a tourist space which supports an obscured,

colonially inherited history (predicated around the tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture) and a warped notion of contemporary realities.

Durban: An Enchanted Pleasure Palace

The tropes of paradise, indigenous culture and adventure work in the urban context of Durban in particular ways to discursively and romantically set Durban up as an enchanted palace of pleasure. This designation has its roots in the rationale offered by the KZNTA (2002f:6):

What is the image, ethos and ambience (reputation) that Durban wishes to project into the tourist-source markets? As the principal gateway into the Kingdom of the Zulu, surely it needs to conform more to this branding. It is suggested that Durban has the potential of being the most significant African City as a coastal tourism destination. Its key access points, such as the airport, harbour and main roads, need to project more of an image in keeping with the branding of the Kingdom of the Zulu (KZNTA, 2002f:6).

This rationale reveals a number of crucial points in understanding the strategy associated with the positioning of Durban. Firstly, as the principal gateway into KwaZulu-Natal, it is hoped to align Durban more significantly with the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' brand. Secondly, it is apparent, that on some level it is hoped that the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' marketing strategy will tie into marketing Durban as an African city. Africanity in terms of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' rhetoric can be achieved in Durban, according to the KZNTA (2002f:6) in the following format:

If Rio de Janeiro is used as a comparative example, its beaches have names such as Copacabana; Ipanema; and Flamengo, which have all created international brand images in their own right. Durban offers North, South and Battery as some of its names, none of which conjure up an exotic image in keeping with the Kingdom of the Zulu. Umhlanga is perhaps the one exception and has certainly been able to develop its own image.

This notion approximates into exoticised and romantic discourses of Africanity and African urbanity as discussed in Chapter 3. Thus, Durban is positioned within a tribal Africanity. It is represented as a 'bewitching playground' rather than a fully-fledged city. Thus, Durban is "Africa's Kingdom of the Zulu's bewitching playground" (KZNTA, 2002g:1). The implication of this coincides with the general impression that African urbanity is scarcely comprehensible. African urbanity can only be conceived of in terms

of exotic appeals to tribal, magical and 'bewitched' discourses. These discourses negate the existence of a city based in modernity. Instead of being governed by a democratically elected government, the perception is created that the city follows the principles of witchcraft. Thus, the Durban found in these accounts, in the words of Myers (1996:408), "has a kind of hyperreality, where the real world is...not the real world". As such, Durban is not represented as a city but rather as South Africa's 'bewitching playground'.

This exoticising of Durban is all-pervasive. Indeed, the KZNTA (2002h:1) refers to Durban as an exotic "Enchanted Pleasure-Palace" which is reminiscent of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's (1772-1834) poem, *Khubla Kahn*, reproduced in Box 5.1 below.

Box 5.1: Khubla Kahn

In Xanadu did KHUBLA KAHN
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where ALPH, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man.

Down to a sunless sea
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round:
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momentally was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermittent Burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river run,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sunk in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Khubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves'
Where was heard the mingled measure
From the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she play'd
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! Those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread:
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.

(Reproduced in Hayward, 1956:255).

The resonances with Durban's representations of itself in comparison to this poem are uncanny. The poem could easily read:

In Durban did KZNTA

A stately pleasure-palace decree
 Where UMGENI, the sacred river, ran
 Through caverns measureless to man
 Down to a sunny sea.

Inserting Durban into the poem affords some interesting insights. According to Beer (1991), one of the major themes of Coleridge's poem concerns lost paradise. As has been indicated, paradise as a trope, is vital in KZNTA's marketing of Durban. In the first stanza, Khan attempts to "rebuild the lost paradise in a world which is, like himself, fallen" (Beer, 1991:224). In this broad conception, Man (with connotations to Adam and original sin), has fallen from grace. Durban is thus essentially a fallen Eden. The second stanza expresses demonic forces, while the third depicts harmony. Durban has a seedy underbelly and high levels of crime although this is not mentioned in the rhetoric of the KZNTA (with the exception of the publication of a brochure which offers some broad, generic safety tips over a range of situations [KZNTA, 2002k]). The KZNTA prefers to depict images of harmony as in Coleridge's fourth stanza where "there is a vision of paradise regained" (Beer, 1991:224). House (1953:206) contends that "the Paradise contains knowledge of the threat of its own possible destruction. It is not held out as a permanent gift...It is not the essence of this Paradise that it must be lost; but there is a risk that it may be lost". Similarly, Durban is held up as a lost paradise which needs to be rebuilt into a pleasure palace. However, as the poem intimates, paradise is always risky and subject to destabilisation.

Grant (1972:134) observes that "what has to be noticed about the circumstances of *Khubla Khan* is its orientalism, and its relation to the exotic landscape and reports of travellers". Few, in the eighteenth century had ever travelled the Orient. Almost certainly, "the orientalism of the early Romantics derives from experiences like the childhood reading of the Arabian Nights...It is colourful, picturesque and dismissive" (Watson, 1966:231). Grant (1972:134) points out that a "taste for the oriental was in vogue in England in the second half of the eighteenth century". It appears that tastes for the exotic are still prevalent three centuries later and are still used to entice travellers – this time to other exotic locales, for example, the pleasure domes of subtropical Durban. Indian culture, as previously discussed, is held up as an example of Eastern exotica – not dissimilar to the Romantics' fascination with 'Orientals'. Similarly, as illustrated, indigenous 'Zulu' culture is invoked in exotic terms.

Part of Durban's hedonistic appeal also rests in its buzzing nightlife, a pleasure palace of entertainment: "Durban Metro after dark is abuzz with elegant lounges, funky taverns and cosy inns...distinctive local theatre and live music...trendy clubs, pubs and discos" (KZNTA, 2002h:1). Theme evenings ("Asian evenings, Zulu evenings and Port of Durban evenings are just a few" [KZNTA, n.d.c:4]) are also offered to conference delegates. Visitors are invited to "Rave 'till dawn and catch sunrise over the vast Indian Ocean horizon – this is nightlife in a modern, authentic African metropolis!" (KZNTA, 2002h:1). Interestingly, the appeal to the hedonistic is juxtaposed against the ever-present trope of paradise (vast ocean horizon), adventure (rave 'till dawn) and indigenous culture in the vein of Africanity as envisioned by the KZNTA ('authentic' African metropolis). It seems that even distinctly contemporary elements of Durban's urban life are subjected to exoticising conventions. Thus, the KZNTA easily represents Durban as "Africa's Kingdom of the Zulu's bewitching seaside playground" (KZNTA, 2002g:1).

Durban's exoticised enchanted pleasure-palace is said to be "sophisticated and cosmopolitan" (KZNTA, 2002h:1) and "enchanting" (KZNTA, 2002i:1). However, like the pleasure dome of Coleridge's poem, Durban's construction as a pleasure-palace is little more than a simulacrum. Watson (1966:232) contends that *Khubla Khan's* pleasure dome and its surrounding grounds, which have been "despotically willed into existence as a tyrant's toy", reek of artificiality. Similarly, the mediator of Durban's image, the KZNTA, in a somewhat contrived fashion, has decreed Durban a pleasure-palace. Therefore, it is important to remember that exotic, romantic and hyperreal Durban is constructed through specific reference to a history of colonial and romantic discourses that have long penetrated city imaginations within the context of Durban. It is in these ideological and imaginary spheres that colonialism lingers. Making Durban unreal to its tourists releases them "from any concern for or culpability in the everyday struggles for existence in the real" Durban (Myers, 1996:421). The imagined Durban has thus to an extent (although not completely) sidelined other co-existing place-images and histories (Myers, 1996).

Exoticising cities through tourist representations, as pointed out in Chapter 2, merely leads to an obscuring of apartheid histories of segregation and inequality in favour of an artificially constructed image of Durban as a multicultural city and exotic African space. Moreover, it appears that inequality is not set to decrease in the privileged spaces of the tourist encounter. For example, it is stated that hotels "along

the beachfront should be able to provide a degree of exclusiveness for use of certain areas of the beach. The hotels could then start to build an image linked to their particular beach areas" (KZNTA, 2002f:6). Furthermore, such "a clustering could, for example, use the name of 'Embizeni', which would start to create an image and branding for marketing purposes that would work within the Kingdom of the Zulu" campaign (KZNTA, 2002f:7). The implications of this are astounding. To recommend that beaches be reserved for those who can afford them is repugnant. The beaches along the beachfront are currently free and open to all who wish to use them. They are particularly popular in summer when huge numbers of (black African) domestic tourists arrive from upcountry. Restricting certain areas of the beachfront smacks of exclusions reminiscent of apartheid. Moreover, that hotels should build images linked to their beach areas sounds notes of caution. One is left with the ghastly picture of a future beach theming centred around 'Kingdom of the Zulu' rhetoric which sees black African people dressed in traditional costume facilitating the pleasures of foreign tourists while the majority of Durbanites are excluded from that same beach space. Again and again, it seems apparent that contemporary, urban, black Africans have no space in the city.

The reality and poverty of black Africans is systematically ignored. In one case, a brochure proclaims: "Thriving business and shopping districts have spread out from the city centre to the leafy suburbs north and west of the city" (KZNTA, n.d.a:4). It is interesting to note what is left out of this geographical phrasing. The intersecting space, Northwest Durban, is actively excluded from these spaces of prolific growth and economic opportunity. Northwest Durban encompasses the township of KwaMashu and the peri-urban/ rural areas of Inanda. These areas are predominantly occupied by black Africans and are effectively excluded from the profits and successes of the areas which border them.

Instead of focusing investment where it is most needed, the primary node within Durban has been identified as the Beachfront. Secondary areas of focus encompass an eco-tourism link to The Valley of A Thousand Hills, 'Zulu' Heritage, Culture and Township Tourism and the Durban Marina. Thus, the recommendation for Durban "focuses on the 3 core attractions of Coastal; Heritage & Culture; and Wildlife" (KZNTA, 2002f:7). One of the key projects identified as a site for development and joint public/ private sector funding includes the Point Waterfront Development. Within the Point Waterfront, uShaka Marine World, at the South end of Durban's primary node, is

seen to be crucial to figuring Durban as an African, 'Kingdom of the Zulu' City. Indeed, the

development of the Point Waterfront will go along (sic) way to providing a significant Secondary Attraction and range of Visitor Facilities, which will boost the Primary Attraction of the beach. Hopefully attention will be paid to its 'Zuluness' being in keeping with the Kingdom of the Zulu (KZNTA, 2002f:6).

It is to this development that the discussion now turns.

Conclusion

Discursive notions of Durban's identity are established by the KZNTA's predominantly rural 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. By examining the selling of cities in general and Durban in particular, this chapter has provided a context for critiquing the representational strategies of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. The 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign has been dissected in terms of a trilogy of tropes which sets the framework for understanding mainstream representations of Durban. As a crucial site in the province, Durban is packaged in accordance with the wider 'Kingdom of the Zulu' tropes. The selling of Durban is thus rooted in colonial stereotypes and the identity of Durban presented is that of a ruralised, colonial paradise with an emphasis on indigenous culture and adventure activities. The following chapter examines how these colonial discourses and imperatives are internalised in the built fabric of Durban. Together with the next chapter, this chapter illustrates how in some cases, Durban's identity and history as a creolised urban space has been marginalised in favour of an identity flavoured by colonialism. Nevertheless, as Part IV highlights, rural, colonial identities are not the only identities available; instead, there are various groupings within Durban who are committed to creating a creolised, African (D)urban identity.

6

Kingdom of uShaka

Durban is Dull:-

Surely Durban is the slowest place under the sun. There is probably no other town of 6000 inhabitants where so little is done to amuse, excite or entertain the residents as here. Year by year the public amusements of the town get fewer and fewer. Little by little, society in this borough is falling asleep (The Natal Mercury, 1872; cited in The Mercury, 2002a:7).

Durban is loosing its lustre:

The not so Golden Mile.

Take Durban...

Downtown Durban could have become an unselfconscious, lively and interesting post-colonial African city...Instead, the politicians and their buddies in big business have fumbled the ball once more...

Hotel beds were lying empty for the first time in years, restaurants were closing...

The fun has gone out of what few pleasures downtown Durban might once have held (Matshikiza in Mail & Guardian, 2002:26).

Introduction

As conveyed by the sentiments of the two quotes above, Durban has long suffered from the stigma that it is dull. This is a perception that those responsible for selling Durban (led by the eThekweni Municipality) are desperate to change. Linking back to the previous chapter, it is argued that in uShaka Marine World (a marine theme park), discourses established and promulgated by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign are translated into material practice, thereby contributing to the cultural production of Durban's space. This example clearly illustrates the close relationship between identity and urbanity discussed in Chapter 2. uShaka Marine World legitimises identities and representations of Durban which rely on outdated stereotypes by materially re-inscribing a colonially inspired, ruralised identity on the Durban landscape. The chapter opens by briefly framing the following discussion within the literature on theme parks. Thereafter, various contextual elements of uShaka Marine World are considered followed by an interrogation of the manner in which the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' discourses are materially expressed in the uShaka Marine World development. The chapter closes by highlighting the limitations of producing urbanity and identity through a privatised framework and lays the platform for Part IV's examination of various cultural practitioners' efforts to re-energise the link between urbanity and Africanity.

Theme Parks

The introduction to this thesis notes that in the global climate of de-industrialisation, cultural strategies and tourism have become important in rejuvenating cities. Culture and cultural industries are increasingly being treated as drivers of urban regeneration.¹ Culture is used by cities as a tool and an economic base, often resulting in the privatisation and theming of space in theme parks. Urban cultural strategies support a city's symbolic economy, that is, according to Zukin (1995:2), "its visible ability to produce both symbols and space". Zukin (1995:24) asserts that "Every attempt to rearrange space in the city is also an attempt at visual re-presentation". Selling cities, discussed in the previous chapter, is one facet of this trend. Closely linked (and working in tandem with the selling of cities by providing 'attractions') is the creation of flagship projects. Much has been written about culture-led flagship regeneration (for example, see Evans, 2005; Miles, 2005a; Miles, 2005b; Yeoh, 2005). A flagship development may take many forms; in the case of Durban, it takes the form of a theme park.

Paradis (2004) points out that theme parks are a key feature of the postmodern, post-industrial economy. Before addressing uShaka Marine World as a space which is culturally produced in the context of reinvented colonial tropes popularised by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign, it is necessary to briefly anchor the proceeding discussion within the literature on theme parks. van Eeden (2004:21) defines theme parks as "invented or contrived landscapes that operate according to specific social and symbolic practices that manipulate space, culture, and history in some manner". As will become evident, uShaka Marine World is a contrived, manipulated landscape which adequately fulfils van Eeden's (2004) definition. As hyperreal simulacra, theme parks usually distort, or portray a nostalgic image of the past aided by a themed architecture and environment. Together, van Eeden (2004) and Paradis (2004) provide a useful overview of the theoretical literature underpinning theme parks and themed environments to date. Important within this literature is research on the various Disney theme parks. van Eeden (2004) points to the work of Klugman et al. and Smoodin in this regard. There are also those who are critical of the criticism thus far on Disney (Marcus, 1997).

¹ See the special issue of *Urban Studies*, 42(5-6).

Davis (1995) trains her theoretical lens more specifically on marine theme parks. She pays special attention to the marketing, construction and delivery of 'nature' within these parks in the North American context. Marine theme parks combine pure entertainment with educational activities. However, they produce a private version of nature which highlights environmental issues and visions of nature (and its future) that are consistent with corporate America's interests. Human-animal interactions and their long histories are generally ignored. Moreover, marine theme parks generally obscure "democratic pressures for environmental preservation, safety, and health" (Davis, 1995:215). While marine theme parks do address popular environmental concerns, issues of pollution and resource depletion receive short shrift and solutions are confined to corporate contexts (Davis, 1995). Such points should be considered before analysing uShaka Marine World.

This thesis is not merely about an isolated theme park but rather about culture, identity and the city. Paying attention to two sociologists Sharon Zukin and John Hannigan, who have inserted the city into debates about theming, helps broaden the focus. Zukin (1995:77) contends that Disney theme parks raise "serious questions about the social and political consequences of marketing culture, from cultural tourism to cultural strategies of urban development". Theme parks can stimulate urban development and contribute to creating an image of growth for cities (a notion which those involved in uShaka Marine World are very much aware). Moreover, "the flourishing of new cultural meanings in the highly competitive environment of urban spaces makes it more urgent to understand their material effects" (Zukin, cited in Miles, 2005a:900).

Theme parks offer new social spaces which offer alternatives to cities. Since cities decreasingly embody collective public identities, the artificial worlds of theme parks have become cities' safe places and their virtual reality. Zukin (1995) argues that the Disney model of urban space (in which difference is aestheticised and fear is controlled) is that which is fuelling the public-private regeneration of cities. Disney offers a persuasive argument for the privatisation of public space. The landscapes of Disney's theme parks fashion a public culture of security and civility which are seemingly absent in contemporary cities. Visual coherence, social control and cleanliness are important features of this space. Disney is an example of how to reduce the threat of social diversity and increase security in public spaces. Disney theme parks are microcosms of real cities; however, the manner in which collective identity is created is strictly market-based. The production of a one-dimensional space thus "creates a fictive narrative of

social identity" (Zukin, 1995:59). Moreover, the insular park, with its gated admission, suggests that smaller parts of cities are isolated from the greater whole. Using visual culture, private management and spatial control, Disney theme parks idealise the public spaces of cities and offer competitive, consensual strategies for city officials seeking to stimulate economic development. It is no wonder then that the Disney ideal has in turn shaped representations of urban space beyond the park gates. Themed urban spaces create a bland, controlled, civil space held together by consumption. Theme parks impose new meanings on the city and produce new social spaces which provide an alternative to the public spaces of the city (Zukin, 1995).

Hannigan (1998) is also especially concerned with the privatisation of urban public space through theming. Urban development is increasingly taking effect through themed projects with the result that the city itself resembles a theme park. Thus, through a discussion of its various components (theme parks, casinos, heritage developments and shopping malls), Hannigan (1998) offers a detailed interrogation of what he terms the 'Fantasy City' or the theme park city. By analysing the urban entertainment economy, he queries the homogenising, corporate tendencies of themed urban landscapes. Moreover, he suggests that the urban entertainment economy creates heavily secured, privatised themed islands in otherwise taboo inner city areas. These themed islands, he cynically argues, "welcome a constant flow of tourists embarked on leisure safaris into the depths of the postmodern metropolis" (Hannigan, 1998:200). Hannigan (1998) argues that such theming obscures cultural diversity and non-globalised spaces within the city. The urbanity created in such a frame is problematic in terms of its creation of spaces of power and exclusion.

In the South African theme park literature, both Hall (1995, 1994) and van Eeden (2004) have examined the 'Lost City' in terms of its representation of Africa through colonial myths and stereotypes. van Eeden (2004) argues that the cultural production of theme parks is inflected by colonial ideologies. She is interested in the manner in which the "built environment colludes in stereotyping Africa" (van Eeden, 2004:20). Themed landscapes position Africa as a site of entertainment and consumption, disguising history and culture in the process. Therefore, theme parks in Africa and beyond can be approached from a postcolonial framework in order to illuminate the cultural representations of contemporary Durban society.

There is also a growing critical literature on the themed landscapes of Johannesburg (Bremner, 2004; Mbembe, 2004). Bremner (2004) highlights the

implications themed landscapes have for the South African urban environment. She argues that the privatisation of the space of Johannesburg fragments the urban landscape into a disconnected theme park city. She argues that themed environments “hollow out parts of the city and, on the basis of idealised images, construct urban places appealing to the desire, nostalgia or paranoia of people who can pay to be there” (Bremner, 2004:131-132). She further contends that the “gritty, complex city, as opposed to its glitzy, idealised counterpart, has highways, crime, suburban sprawl, vacant office space, neglected buildings, congested traffic, poor people, McDonald’s. But it has been obscured and upstaged” (Bremner, 2004:132). Such a situation is mirrored in part in Durban’s urban landscape – especially in the context of uShaka Marine World.

Dimensions of uShaka Marine World²

Durban’s uShaka Island... is the catalyst for a 10-year development that will essentially trigger the Point development, get investor confidence back, and give the city back the beachfront excitement for which it was renowned during the 60s (The Mercury, 2002b:3).

Bearing in mind the literature on themed landscapes in South Africa and beyond, it is apposite to examine the uShaka Marine World theme park in Durban. uShaka Marine World is conceptualised as “a world-class marine-based theme park” (Brink, 2002a:2). This flagship development is comprised of three main components: a water park (Wet ‘n Wild), an oceanarium (Sea World) and retail facilities (uShaka Village Walk). As such, it is guaranteed to supply fun to those with consumerist impulses. Located on the beachfront, the park has appropriated the beach immediately facing it. The aquarium and water park are gated attractions while the beach and retail components are open to the general public. In addition, uShaka Marine World is designed to accommodate research and educational facilities including the South African Association for Marine Biological Research (SAAMBR) and its subsidiaries, the Oceanographic Research Institute (ORI) and the NPC Sea World Education Centre. uShaka Marine World is expected to be pivotal in turning Durban into “a world class destination, and a tourism attraction second to none” (Cole, 2002:3). Accordingly, “the

² Research for this chapter was conducted during the planning stages of the development and was completed in January 2004. uShaka Marine World opened in April 2004. The original name uShaka Island was changed to uShaka Marine World so as to emphasise that uShaka Marine World is not an island but rather a part of the broader Point Precinct (Molinar Interview, 2003).



Figure 6.1: Map of uShaka Marine World (uShaka Marine World, 2006)



Figure 6.2: The Point Precinct (Durban Point Development Company, n.d.)

theme park will become a vibrant focal point for visitors to Durban and South Africa" (uShaka Island, 2002a:1). Figure 6.1 provides a view of the overall map of the theme park.

uShaka Marine World comprises the first phase of a land development plan which deals with a portion of inner city land known generically as the Point Precinct (Chetty, 2002). The Point Precinct (see Figure 6.2) is located on a spit of land immediately adjacent to the harbour and incorporates 55 hectares of dilapidated bay/city interface. The Point was the site of disembarkation for both the early colonialists and later indentured labourers from India. As such, historically, the Point developed into a vibrant community centred around the harbour. During the nineteenth and early parts of the twentieth century "the mercantile and imperially orientated political economy of Durban concentrated virtually all activity – residence, recreation, workplace and urban development – on and around the Bay and the Point" (Grant & Scott, 1996:131). Thus, the Point area "emerged as an area of mixed land use and was characterised by the combined presence of a larger, predominantly non-permanent working-class population and a smaller, permanently employed, middle income group" (Grant & Scott, 1996:131). Migrant or togt labourers working on the railways or in the harbour were housed in barracks in the Point area. It has been estimated that these labourers numbered 30 000 up until the 1930s (Pascola, 1995). In addition, there was a large Indian community based in this area (see Pillay [2002] for a popular history of the Indian community's association with the Point). The Point area was a multiracial environment in which whites, Indians, black Africans and coloureds lived in various forms of formal and informal accommodation. By 1985 the population had dwindled to approximately 1570 persons (1000 black Africans, 340 whites, 150 Indians and 60 coloureds) (Hallon et al., 1986). Current plans for the Point in general and uShaka Marine World in particular largely ignore prior histories of the Point area.

For some years, the Point has been characterised by urban decay and blight. The Point Precinct Urban Renewal Project aims to regenerate this area and incorporate the Point into a dynamic and productive inner city space (Chetty, 2002). Goals include: creating a special, attractive place within Durban; ensuring balance within the inner city in terms of development projects; ensuring accessibility; and promoting revitalisation (uShaka Island, 2002e). The aim is to create "a human scaled environment where the buildings and streets give a sense of safety, identity, history and place" (uShaka Island, 2002b:1). However, Govender (2004) has criticised the design of the

Point Precinct in general, arguing that it is elite-centric, facilitates scant connection to the existing inner city, creates meaningless, identity devoid public spaces dominated by franchises and is inaccessible to public transport (such as minibus taxis).

In a context of scepticism, uShaka Marine World is one of the first tangible pieces of concrete development in the Point Precinct. Over the past twenty years, there have been several attempts aimed at kick-starting development in the Point area (Gilbert & Hampton, 1991a, 1991b; Town Planning Branch, 1987; Hallon et al., 1986). Keith Barnett (Interview 2005) of the eThekweni Municipality's Engineering Unit observes that none of these plans ever received unanimous backing or came to fruition. The current development promises to be the fillip of regeneration in the area, reorienting the area into "a world class waterfront" (uShaka Island, 2002b:1) and stimulating a host of business and investment opportunities (uShaka Island, 2002d). Mixed usage of the Point Precinct is proposed (uShaka Island, 2002b, 2002d). This extends from "residential to commercial, retail and light industrial in the form of services that will meet the needs of tourism-related developments in the area" (*The Mercury*, 2002b:3). Thus, property developers, offices, residences, financial institutions, construction companies, retailers, tourism companies, theme park operators and developers, hotels, entertainment companies, restaurants, leisure industries, theme events industries and marina construction companies are all potential occupiers of the Point Precinct (uShaka Island, 2002d).

The ten year Point Precinct Development is expected to cost approximately R2 billion in private sector investment (*The Mercury*, 2002b). It is jointly funded by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and the eThekweni Municipality, both of whom are the two principal shareholders (Brink, 2002b). The eThekweni Municipality mandated Moreland Developments to negotiate with Rocpoint (Pty) Limited, the current Malaysian owners of large portions of the Point, "on their behalf in order to structure an agreement between the city and the Malaysian landowners" (*The Mercury*, 2002b:3) for the use of the land.

Two companies have been set up to facilitate and run the Point development and the uShaka Marine World development respectively. Mayor Obed Mlaba and Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo are the Council representatives on the Board of Directors of the Durban Point Development Co. (Pty) Limited. Two representatives from Rocpoint also sit on the board. The composition of this Board is split between private and public sector stakeholders, a feature which is mirrored in the structure of the Durban

Marine Theme Park (Pty) Limited which is responsible for the uShaka Marine World development. Mayor Obed Mlaba is the Chairman of this Board of Directors. Deputy Mayor Logie Naidoo is the Deputy Chair. Both men are also the Council representatives on the board of Directors. City Manager Michael Sutcliffe as well as two representatives from DBSA, one from Citibank and one from SAAMBR complete the Board of Directors. The project managers of both developments are Moreland Developments (*The Mercury*, 2002b; uShaka Island, 2002c).

Importantly, the uShaka Marine World project is central to Durban's material attempt to showcase itself as a globally competitive city. As such, uShaka Marine World is "one part of the city's long term economic strategy that is aimed at injecting, rejuvenating and unlocking development potential" (*The Mercury*, 2002b:2). uShaka Marine World interacts and is framed by a number of municipal strategies and plans. The Long Term Development Framework (LTDF) aims to provide support for flagship developments (Durban Unicity, 2001). The municipality has thus "identified the Point Waterfront Development, spearheaded by the uShaka Island Marine Park, as one of its carefully selected, strategic 'flagship developments' and has provided the project with considerable political and financial support" (uShaka Island, 2002e:6). The LTDF emphasises the need for the economic base of Durban to be strengthened (Durban Unicity, 2001). Thus, "the Marine Park project has been identified as a strategic intervention to enhance the tourism products of the city, thereby helping to sustain and grow this very important sector of the local economy" (uShaka Island, 2002e:6). At the metropolitan level, the LTDF identifies access to information, technology and education opportunities, leisure opportunities, and civic pride and sense of belonging as objectives (uShaka Island, 2002e). The marine park supports these objectives in that the park will be used for educational purposes, leisure, entertainment and "will be an 'icon' development that the citizens of Durban can be truly proud of" (uShaka Island, 2002e:6). Thus, the project "is in line with the [LTDF's] broad strategy to ensure the city is globally competitive" (uShaka Island, 2002e:6).

On a narrower scale, the development forms an intrinsic part of the Inner City Development Framework Plan (uShaka Island, 2002e). This plan "has advanced the notion of multi-faceted revitalization programmes supported by 'landmark developments on key sites" (uShaka Island, 2002e:7). The uShaka Marine World development is seen as one point of a broader tourism 'Golden Triangle' (see Figure 1.2 in Chapter 1). In this context, the marine "park is expected to substantially revitalise Durban's profile, stature

and product offering as a competitive tourist destination" (*The Mercury*, 2002b:2). Thus, the project is expected to "rejuvenate and diversify the city's tourism products and serve as a generator of further confidence and investment within the beachfront as well as the Inner City and Metropolitan Region" (uShaka Island, 2002e:7).

The eThekweni Municipality has designated its inner city development plan 'iTRUMP' (Inner Thekwini Urban Renewal and Management Programme).³ iTRUMP is linked to uShaka Marine World in that while not directly involved, iTRUMP places "its energy at the fringes, identifying opportunities and spin-off developments" (Kearney, 2002:6). iTRUMP attempts to moderate the developmental practices occurring at the Point. For example, while from the development's side it was felt that informal economic activities should be disallowed in the vicinity of the theme park, iTRUMP motivated for their inclusion. In this manner, Richard Dobson (Interview, 2003), Programme Leader of iTRUMP, believes that iTRUMP is beginning to influence flagship developments in Durban. However, signs erected around the perimeter of uShaka Marine World prohibit informal activities and traders. It would seem that iTRUMP's influence is limited where their input conflicts with the concerns of big business.

In 1997 Rocpoint unveiled a plan for the Point area which was approved by the municipality. More recently in 2001 as part of an initiative on behalf of the municipality, an updated Point Framework Plan was prepared by Moreland Developments "to facilitate and expedite development in the area whilst also providing a contextual framework to the Marine Park project as a flagship development and catalyst to further private sector investment" (uShaka Island, 2002e:9). This plan takes cognisance of strategies which address wider urban renewal challenges. The municipality's political leadership has endorsed this plan. In addition, no conflict is seen to exist between the plan and the prevailing zoning situation in the Point area which is detailed in an appendix to the Town Planning Regulations (Development Management Department, 1998). This appendix recognises the need for flexibility in the Point area in terms of development. It allows for four character zones to be developed including ocean, central, heritage and festival marketplace precincts (Development Management Department, 1998).

uShaka Marine World is the designated flagship or "gateway development" (uShaka Island, 2002e:12) of the Point Precinct. Flagship developments,

³ iTRUMP is discussed in more detail in Chapters 7 and 8.

such as uShaka Marine World, have long been perceived to be the cornerstones of creating vibrant and revitalised downtowns (Hannigan, 1998). uShaka Marine World consists of a site comprising eight hectares which represents sixteen percent of the Point Precinct. Its construction and establishment is estimated at R700 million. Approximately R500 million has been provided by the eThekweni Municipality while the balance obtained from DBSA and Citibank (*The Mercury*, 2002b). The architects working on the project were briefed to heavily landscape the development with an 'African' theme (Douglas, 2002). Precisely what this means will be unpacked below. Certainly such comments point to ruralised, colonial notions. uShaka Village Walk is designed to reflect a village style environment – somewhat inappropriate given the urban context. Wet 'n Wild consists of freshwater slides, rides and pools. Sea World "will offer a comprehensive, interactive marine experience aimed at educating, stimulating and entertaining visitors" (uShaka Island, 2002a:2). Components of Sea World include an extensive sub-aqueous aquarium with gallery viewing into tanks; a 1250-seater pavilion geared for dolphin shows; a seal performance pool, stadium and penguin rookery; a rehabilitation centre for marine life; specialist marine tanks; and research space. Sea World is partly housed in a fake shipwreck (a fin de siècle cargo steamer



Figure 6.3: The Phantom Ship (Photograph by author)

known as the Phantom Ship [see Figure 6.3] – complete with an ersatz history [see uShaka Marine World, 2005]). The shipwreck features "swim-thru and walk-thru tanks, tube slides and shark tanks" (uShaka Island, 2002e; *The Mercury*, 2002b:12). Sea World is one of the top ten oceanariums in the world in terms of water volume and the biggest oceanarium outside of the United States of America (Brink, 2002b). Both Sea World and Wet 'n Wild are "gated" attractions (uShaka Island, 2002a:2).

Gated attractions are premised on exclusion. There is a strong imperative to rid the Point area of undesirable people and activities. Inner city environments, like the Point, experience a range of social pathologies. de Oliver (2001:240) argues that such “environments tend to promote anxiety and consternation, real and imagined, from the mainstream mass market, and are thus inconsistent with the desirable [rural African] (in this case) aesthetics featured in the tourist promotions”. Thus, as Durban’s reliance on the mainstream tourist market grows, it requires inner city space configurations that facilitate the transferral of rural, ‘African’ cultural aesthetics to the tourist market at the expense of making the venue accessible to all Africans. This despite statements that the area should be “accessible to all” (uShaka Island, 2002e:43). Unashamedly, there “are contractual agreements from the council to relocate any elements that do not belong in a primary tourism node such as this” (*The Mercury*, 2002b:3). Additionally, emphasis is placed on the creation of appropriate edges (fences and boundaries) which will provide protection and definition for users of the space. (uShaka Island, 2002b). In this regard, “high levels of surveillance of public spaces” (uShaka Island, 2002b:1) will be enabled. This panoptic concern with surveillance is somewhat worrying (see Koskela, 2000 and McLaughlin & Munice, 1999). The expulsion of people and activities seen as deviant creates further social marginalisation and exclusion.⁴

While the poor are marginalised, it is increasingly the wealthy who are accorded full citizenship and participation in the realm of commodities in Durban. Yet those involved in uShaka Marine World do not seem to grasp these debates. Tom Molinar (Interview 2003), the Development Director for the Three Cities Group (shareholders in the uShaka Marine World management company) and hence uShaka Marine World, stresses the strong, stern approach required for dealing with the homeless. He points out that the Point Precinct is privately owned thereby implying that the homeless have no right to be there. He claims that the developers are not simply evicting these people but moving them into other rural areas – semantics which seek to surrender accountability and which suggest that the poor have no place in the city. Yet issues involving the poor and homeless of the Point Precinct are not so easily defined or solved. The Ark, a shelter for approximately 700-900 homeless people, located in the Point Precinct was seen as undesirable in the context of the Point’s renewal. Hugely

⁴ There is an entire field of literature which is concerned with homelessness, social polarisation and belonging (see Katz, 2001; Mitchell, 2001 and McDowell, 1999 for entry into this topic).

controversial, the relocation of these people away from the Point Precinct displays a sanitisation of the built environment and a privileging of capital and wealth over poverty.⁵

Under neoliberal state imperatives less money is being spent on welfare. Issues of social justice thus emerge within this context. While reconstruction and development have always featured prominently on South Africa's developmental agenda, it appears that, as Smith (1996:117) puts it, "previously accepted notions of social justice and an explicit concern with injustice...have been flushed away". Similarly, the multicultural city, lauded by many, is in fact "a fully repressive post-justice city". In the punitive, postmodern city (as Mitchell, 2001 calls it) or the revanchist city (as Smith, 1996 terms it), social difference and "diversity is no longer maintained by protecting, and struggling to expand, the rights of the most disadvantaged, but by pushing the disadvantaged out" (Mitchell, 2001:71). Hence, projects such as uShaka Marine World are "contaminated by relations of dominance and subordination" (Grant & Scott, 1996:128-129). However, this debate is glossed over by the proponents of uShaka Marine World. Instead, it is glibly proposed, that while transforming "the Point from its current trajectory which is characterised by blight, to a world class waterfront represents a formidable challenge", this regeneration also represents an "impressive opportunity for the city of Durban" (uShaka Island, 2002a:1). Sutcliffe (cited in *The Mercury*, 2002b:2) defends the strategies of the eThekweni Municipality suggesting that the "city's decision to invest R500 million into the project does not mean other projects aimed at addressing the basic needs of the people will be neglected".⁶ Maybe so, but it seems that a spatial restructuring of the social order is being re-entrenched by the project. It appears that certain areas are to be zoned for capitalism and others for social upliftment.

The marine park developers have failed to acknowledge any negative social implications of the development. Instead, rhetoric abounds about the positive benefits of the park's construction. Figures suggest that the development will generate approximately 18 000 temporary construction jobs, 980 permanent full and part time

⁵ This issue has received much ongoing attention in the press. See, for example, Bamford & Mthembu, 2004; Bisetty, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2004e, 2003a, 2003b; Broughton, 2004a, 2004b; Cole, 2004a, 2004b; Gangaram, 2004a, 2004b; Gounden, 2005; Mbanjwa, 2004a, 2004b, 2004c, 2004d, 2004e, 2004f, 2004g, 2004h, 2004i, 2003a, 2003b; Mbanjwa & Broughton, 2004; Meyer, 2004a, 2004b; Newman, 2004a, 2004b; Oellermann & Bolowana, 2004; Sookha, 2004; Sutcliffe, 2003; *The Independent on Saturday*, 2004; *The Mercury*, 2004, 2003.

⁶ The eThekweni Municipality's capital budget for 2002/2003 equals R1792 billion, for 2003/2004, R1955 billion and for 2004/2005, R2293 billion (Mlaba, 2004b; eThekweni Municipality, 2003). The figure quoted is not necessarily drawn from one year's budget.

jobs, and 20 000 related tourism jobs in Durban and KwaZulu-Natal (*The Mercury*, 2002b). The development has impacted on the wider Point Precinct in terms of rising property values and increasing the municipality's rates revenues for the area – one estimate puts it at R13,4 million per annum (*The Mercury*, 2002b). The development is also committed to black economic empowerment initiatives and a "target of no less than one third of the total project expenditure on both the capital and operations costs will be allocated to the targeted group within the theme park's empowerment plan" (*The Mercury*, 2002b:10). Previously disadvantaged groups will comprise 30% participation in terms of the available contracts (*The Mercury*, 2002b). In addition, it "is further envisaged that empowerment opportunities will also be generated within private-public partnerships, the provision of bursaries, skills development and training programmes for operational staff, outsourcing of support service operations and procuring of goods from suppliers" (*The Mercury*, 2002b:10). Black economic empowerment opportunities are intended to be a long-term practice and will be sustained by the hundreds of thousands of visitors who are expected to visit the park each year (*The Mercury*, 2002b). Nevertheless, there has been controversy over allegations of black economic empowerment fronting by some of the uShaka Marine World contractors (Donaldson, 2004; Makhanya, 2004; Mbanjwa, 2004j; Rumney, 2004; *Sunday Tribune*, 2004).

In addition to narratives which justify the park in terms of employment benefits, municipal rhetoric also attempts to situate the park within multicultural or African contexts. Sutcliffe (cited in *The Mercury*, 2002b:2) points out that the people of Durban want "to build [them]selves in a non racial way, bring together people of different races, cultural backgrounds and traditions and in our diversity find out who we really are as Africans". It is necessary to determine whether the uShaka Marine World project can indeed facilitate this aim when, paradoxically, the "the *raison d'être* (sic) for people to visit the area [is] for education, entertainment, fantasy, adventure, research, conservation, business functions and events, shopping, leisure and recreation" (eThekweni Municipality and Development Bank of Southern Africa, cited in *The Mercury*, 2002b:8).

uShaka Marine World themes incorporate "elements of African culture, South Sea island paradises and shipwrecks" (Kearney, 2001:1). Proceeding from the discussion of KZNTA's broad strategies for marketing KwaZulu-Natal and Durban, it is apposite to investigate further how the commodification of uShaka Marine World, within this broader context reproduces colonial metanarratives that situate both the marine development and Durban within the tropes of paradise, indigenous culture and

adventure. An analysis of these three themes will illustrate how the discursive parameters set by the KZNTA – to represent the province through the brand identity of KwaZulu-Natal as the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' – have material repercussions in the space of one site in Durban: uShaka Marine World.

Paradise, Adventure and Indigenous Culture: uShaka Marine World

While the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign is effectively a discursive construction, its discourses do have material outcomes in the space of KwaZulu-Natal as a whole and in Durban more specifically. In Durban, the construction of uShaka Marine World has been guided by the tropes outlined in the previous chapter. Following the concerns of the thesis, here the aim is to desegregate how the discursive constructions of rural African identity have material outcomes in the planning and developmental strategies of the eThekweni Municipality. uShaka Marine World is crucial in terms of its genesis as a material expression of socially constructed notions of identity in Durban. As with the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign, the uShaka Marine World development draws on rural notions of culture and identity and is thus equally critical in contributing to a particular image of Durban that is ever more widely spread.

Through a carefully constructed marketing campaign, uShaka Marine World, even in the developmental stages, began to enter into the imaginations of the Durban public. The theme park concept works in tandem with broader, discursive city marketing imperatives to situate Durban as the "Zulu Kingdom in one, vast and glorious uni-city" (KZNTA, 2002s:2). Indeed, Seymour (Interview, 2002), Molinar (Interview 2003) and Kagiso Ntanga (Interview, 2003), uShaka Marine World's Public Relations Manager, agree that the development is closely linked to the KZNTA who were heavily involved in the park planning, conducted a number of feasibility plans for the park and influenced the design of the infrastructure and visual components. The park fits in perfectly with the KZNTA's desire to more fully promote strong beach tourism destinations in tandem with 'Zulu' heritage. The KZNTA is an aggressive promoter of the marine park (Seymour Interview, 2002). As such, uShaka Marine World is positioning itself as the material manifestation of discourses of Africanness situated around the tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture. The KZNTA "look forward to sharing with you [Durban as a] truly African experience" (KZNTA, 2002s:2) and the uShaka Marine World developers are keen to provide and give illustration of that experience. In this regard it is argued:

Set against the background – KwaZulu-Natal Tourism marketing authority that promotes the province as the 'Kingdom of the Zulus (sic)' of which Durban is the gateway – it makes logical sense that for Durban this attraction maintains this theme and association. And what better than with our own uShaka Island Marine Theme Park (Gibson, 2002a:12).

Accordingly, the development's "key values are excitement, adventure and a celebration of local culture, history and natural resources that are unique to Durban. uShaka Island celebrates all that is good about our city" (Gibson, 2002a:12). It is thus apposite to determine the manner in which these tropes are incorporated into the commodified codes of the tourist experience, as manifest by the uShaka Marine World development, and are offered as sites of pleasure and consumption. The current conception of uShaka Marine World offers Durban as an idyllic utopian paradise and a wild frontier where savage beasts and indigenous people exist in primitive forms. As a result, uShaka Marine World reproduces colonial discourses, as well as creating new neocolonial discourses. These, as will become evident, are not benign and affect discourses about Durban city identity.

The colonially inspired notion of paradise, as given discursive amplification by the KZNTA is apparent in the uShaka Marine World design and rhetoric. Paradise as a trope has infused the establishment and creation of uShaka Marine World. Indeed, one aspect of uShaka Marine World's theming is said to centre around creating a "paradise" (Cole, 2001:1). Paradise, in uShaka Marine World's case, is loosely defined. While, in places, paradisaal inspiration is said to be drawn from South Sea Island sources, in other places, paradise is said to be African. Whatever its inspiration, the "design and theme makes[s] use of indigenous African imagery, lush vegetation, water and natural materials" (uShaka Island, 2002a:1). The developers are attempting to invoke an Edenic quality and "view [which] is just panoramic" (Gibson, 2002d:7). Accordingly, the design theme attempts to maintain "the interaction with land, sea and sky" (uShaka Island, 2002a:1) and there will be plenty shady spots "on the beautiful grassy lawns" (Gibson, 2002d:6).

The uShaka Marine World paradise is invested with mythical properties. Indeed, Mayor Obed Mlaba observes that the uShaka Marine World project will result in the Point area rising "from the ashes like the legendary Phoenix" (Cole, 2002:3). Invoking the mythical Egyptian bird, which burned itself to death once every five hundred years and then came back to life, further ascribes a mythical and Edenic quality to the

area. The area is not meant to represent authentic reality. Rather, like Durban's representation by the KZNTA, uShaka Marine World offers a beach paradise venue in which to frame one's tourist experiences.

Marine wildlife (like terrestrial wildlife in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign) is also crucial to figuring the uShaka Marine World landscape within the trope of paradise. Thus, countless species await the visitor; "fierce and more aggressive species of shark" (Gibson, 2002c) such as the Tiger, Black fin and Oceanic White Tip sharks are earmarked for exhibit. So are smaller sharks like the African Angel, the Short-Nosed Black Tail, the Giant Sleepy and the Hammerhead. Additionally, crustaceans, coral, sea plants, manta rays, seals, dolphins and turtles are displayed (Gibson, 2002c).

In their piece on Disneyland, Tuan with Hoelscher (1997) observe that theme parks have their roots in European princely gardens built between 1500 and 1800. European gardens were conceived as idealised spaces separate from nature, the urban and the social. These gardens were inspired by the biblical Eden. Renaissance thinkers believed that by their ingenuity, paradise on earth could be created in their gardens – a belief held by both Walt Disney and scores of theme park developers. In this conception, the garden was seen to approximate a landscape of perfect climate (eternal spring) in which animals and plants peacefully evolved under the natural custodianship of human beings. Moreover, in order that paradise be simulated, animals must feature. However, wild animals were difficult to incorporate as caging them destroyed the illusion of paradise. Hence, animals displayed were most often mechanical creations or artfully caged birds. Similarly at Disney theme parks, barring a few domestic and petting animals, animals are featured mainly in terms of Disney's suite of anthropomorphic characters. A central feature of the constructed paradise of uShaka Marine World is wildlife both 'real' and simulated (including mascot marine animals who parade the park entertaining visitors). However, the marine life is certainly not wild. Just as wildlife supports KwaZulu-Natal's marketed image of primordial 'bush', so does marine wildlife support uShaka Marine World's marketed image of 'paradise'. Barring the obvious point that wildlife, marine or terrestrial, is held in captivity (whether in the socially constructed space of the game reserve, oceanarium or aquarium), in the context of the marine park, many of the animals are put into direct contact with people as performers in various acts. Seals and dolphins perform daily.

Nevertheless, the marine life is presented as intertwined with this paradisaal landscape. Intersecting with the Edenic landscaping, the marine life is made

visible in the shipwreck through large acrylic panels (Gibson, 2002b). These windows “will give visitors the feeling of being in the water itself while walking through the corridors of sunken ships” (Gibson, 2002c:5). Furthermore, according to Brink (cited in Cole, 2001:1), people “will be able to swim with dolphins” and there are plans to allow visitors to spend some time with the trainers and the dolphins (Gibson, 2002c). One will also be able to snorkel in lagoons stocked with various types of marine life (*The Mercury*, 2002b). Visitors will “be allowed to feed some of the sting rays because they are extremely docile creatures, easily trained to feed at particular times” (Gibson, 2002c:5). In this “inter-active” (Gibson, 2002c:5) setting, animals, positioned as ‘wild’, are essentially commodified and offered to tourists and visitors as examples of natural paradise. Zoos are generally considered to be institutions of captivity. Thus, for the oceanarium not to be considered cruel, the impression needs to be created that the creatures are comfortable in these ‘natural surroundings’. The display tanks are constructed so as to suggest that the marine life is housed in their ‘natural’ habitat. Thus, setting uShaka Marine World up as a paradisaal island – a natural place – subtly categorises the venue as ‘authentic’ and ‘natural’. This allows images of marine wildlife to exist in harmony with the rest of the paradisaal landscaping and theming.

The previous chapter has shown how both dolphins and whales have been connected to mythic conceptions of Shaka. This association is furthered in the uShaka Marine World context, where King Goodwill Zwelithini (cited in Kearney, 2001:1) has observed that “Of marine creatures, the shark garnered the most respect as being representative and symbolic of King Shaka Zulu”. Again, the reasons behind this romanticisation of the past are complex (and more will be said of this later); yet, it once again promotes notions of ocean wildlife as existing independently of time, space and modern culture in a virtually untouched, paradisaal wilderness. The trope of paradise as it is fashioned in uShaka Marine World offers a sanitised, unreal representation of reality. Such strategies entrench and exacerbate colonially inherited notions of a rural, uncivilised Africa.

Ntanga (Interview, 2003) openly admits that the aim of uShaka Marine World is to create paradise. She justifies this by contending that when one visits a theme park, one does not want to see “ugly things” (Ntanga Interview, 2003). She observes that uShaka Marine World should not look like Durban’s central transportation hub, Warwick Junction, which is part of people’s daily lived experience (and by inference, ‘ugly’). On the contrary, uShaka Marine World is a fantasy environment and must be designated as

such (Molinar Interview, 2003). The appropriation of rural, colonial tropes at the expense of vibrant, urbanity negates the positive in the urban. The polarisation between rural African aesthetics ('good') and urban African aesthetics ('bad') is subtly conveyed through the promotion of the former. This colonial-style presentation is further inscribed by uShaka Marine World's treatment of adventure.

Discourses promulgated by the KZNTA about KwaZulu-Natal and Durban within the trope of adventure have had a material effect on the design and construction of uShaka Marine World. In the wider space of KwaZulu-Natal and Durban, uShaka Marine World is positioned as a site of adventure. Indeed, the marine park is offered as an "exciting 'must-see' adventure escapade" (Gibson, 2002d:6). For children, the water park will facilitate "really scary" (Gibson, 2002d:6) experiences. The rationale behind the park centres around the notion that "visitors will always be in proximity to some form of action, be it leaping dolphins, the lazy river ride, beach-based activities or street performances" (uShaka Island, 2002a:1). More "adventurous visitors will be able to put on their snorkels and 'swim-thru' – surrounded by a host of in-shore reef fish – to the huge shipwreck" (Gibson, 2002c:5). One ride will pass through the hull of the shipwreck, "giving those courageous enough a close encounter with some of the large sharks" (Gibson, 2002c:5). The water park's layout thus manipulates the paths of certain rides through the oceanarium so that visitors feel that there is nothing (except glass) between them and fierce sharks and other marine life.

uShaka Marine World is constructed as one big adventure playground, an obvious designation in terms of the park's desire to attract visitors. Like other tourism activities, the activities in the park are meant to generate income. Oceanariums are world-wide loss leaders; therefore, the park is structured so that the retail and water park elements will cross-subsidise the scientific and educational functions (Brink, 2002b). It is in this vein that the adventure experience is promoted. Interestingly, the water park is named Wet 'n Wild – casting allusions to both adventure and wildlife. In a similar fashion to terrestrial wildlife tourism, uShaka Marine World's adventure activities are another permutation of the colonial safari, the new 'action' adventure that visitors to Durban are invited to enjoy. However, as has been specified in the previous chapter, this image is entwined with a problematic, colonial history. Hence, representations of ocean wildlife that invoke feelings of adventure also perpetuate neocolonial consumption within the setting of contemporary Durban.

Crucially central to the figuring of KwaZulu-Natal as the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' and Durban as the gateway to that 'Kingdom', is the trope of indigenous culture. Like the images of ruralised, 'indigenous' Africanity presented in the KZNTA promotional literature, little in uShaka Marine World deviates from the colonial script of representing African identity as static, unchanging and rural in orientation. Ntanga (Interview, 2003) stresses the importance of ensuring that uShaka Marine World coincides with the rest of Durban's marketing and development plans. She observes that 'the Zulu' is a symbol of KwaZulu-Natal and is consequently an important feature in the context of uShaka Marine World. Ntanga (Interview, 2003) admits that the uShaka Marine World developers could have been more creative with their theming but then suggests that this would not have corresponded with the rest of Durban's marketing.

Thus, in alignment with broader discourses operating in Durban, the developers of uShaka Marine World use "African imagery" (uShaka Island, 2002b:1) in order to position their development. According to Neels Brink (Interview, 2002), the Director of Planning and Resorts at Moreland Developments, Durban has two things going for it – it's climate and Zulu culture. As has repeatedly been seen in this thesis, this sentiment is based on a ruralised, colonial and 'traditional' conception of Africanness which dates back to the first colonisers. It is the clearly stated aim of the uShaka Marine World developers to continue and develop the theming of the KZNTA's 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign (Gibson, 2002a). In accordance with the "KwaZulu Natal Tourism marketing authority that promotes the province as the 'Kingdom of the Zulus (sic)' of which Durban is the gateway...it makes logical sense that for Durban this must see attraction maintains this theme and association" (Gibson, 2002a:12). The developers' clear intention is that the marine park "should take on an identity and imagery that closely reflects its geographic, historical and cultural heritage as a landmark for Durban, KwaZulu-Natal and South Africa" (uShaka Island, 2002a:1). This identity and imagery is based on uShaka Marine World's own conception of geography, history and cultural heritage.

The design of the park clearly reflects these identity and imagery concerns. The design is in accordance with the "Urban African Aesthetics" outlined by the Development Management Department (1998:12) in the Point appendix to the Town Planning Regulations. This document emphasises the need to identify the constituents of an 'African' character and implement such elements through landscaping and urban design features such as seating, signage, courtyards, gateways and lighting. Such

landscaping is intended to "open the door to the Point African experience" (Development Management Department, 1998:12). Interestingly, apart from generic guidelines, no comment is offered regarding the precise composition of an urban African aesthetic. Instead, the document merely notes that investigation is required into the flavours constituting African society (Development Management Department, 1998).

This uncertainty is no longer the case with the present design of the uShaka Marine World complex. Here, the developers are clear as to what African urban aesthetics should look like. The architecture and design is said to be an "eclectic mix of all that is truly South Africa" dominated by "thatched-roofed African shops and walkways" (Gibson, 2002d:7). "African" shields are used in the logo, design and decorations (Brink, 2002b). Figure 6.4 provides examples of the extensive use of thatching and shields in the park. Note too the use of shields and assegais at the entrance of uShaka Marine World (bottom right) as well as the supposedly indigenous structures (top left and right) and 'kraal-like' forms (bottom left). The stated intention is that the development should

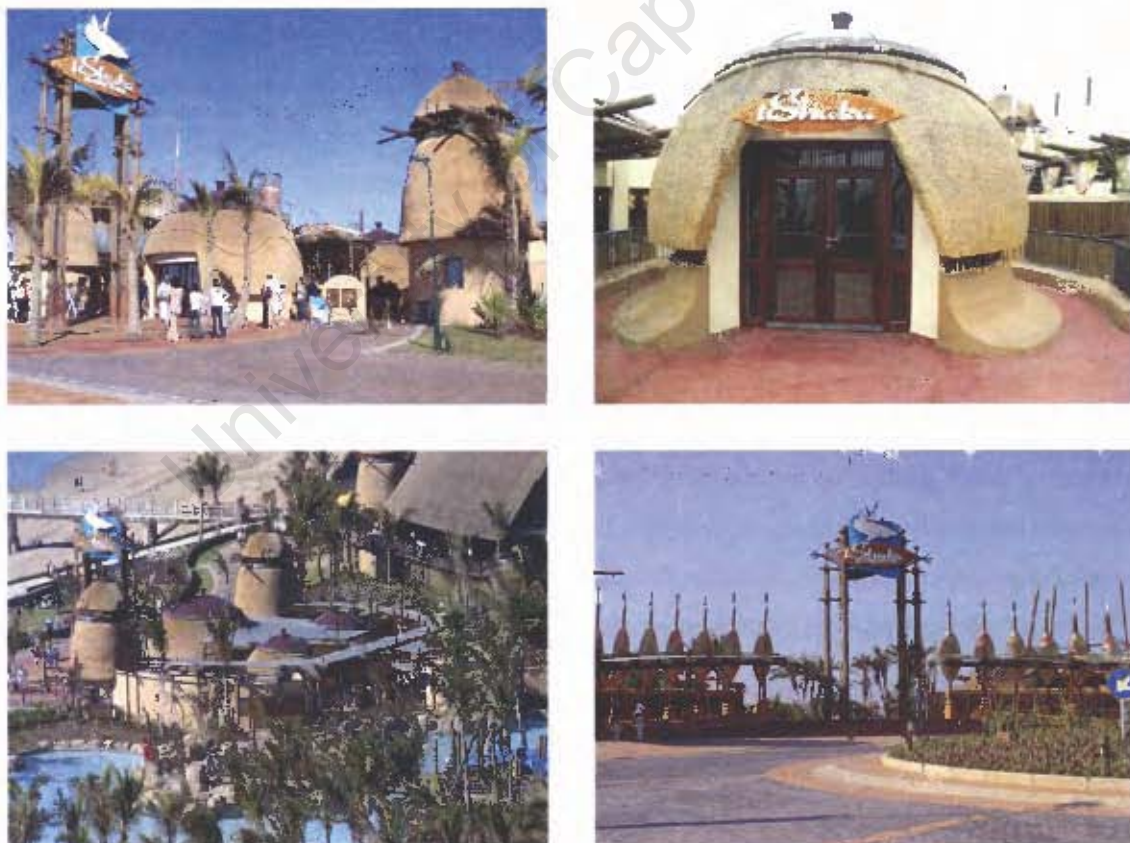


Figure 6.4: Views of uShaka Marine World (uShaka Marine World, 2006; Bottom right photograph by author)

be “planned to celebrate various aspects of regional culture, particularly Zulu heritage” (uShaka Island, 2002e:9). Accordingly, the “design language and imagery for the project takes references from regional heritage, particularly historical Zulu and east African culture which has been given inadequate recognition and expression in the city of Durban – eThekweni” (uShaka Island, 2002e:32). Moreover, “cultural and anthropological heritage can be blended with indigenous landscaping and other features of local history, incident and legend to create a captivating tourism and entertainment experience” (uShaka Island, 2002e:32). It is difficult to see what is indigenous about the multitude of alien palm trees in the development – a planting trend which is despised by local architects Denis Claude and Paul Mikula (Interview, 2003). Regardless, Molinar (Interview, 2003) concurs that the African profile of Durban plays a major part in the imagery of uShaka Marine World and accounts for the inclusion of Zulu spears, shields, thatching, huts and design forms. However, it is pointed out that while “Zulu artifacts, forms, patterns and motifs may be a source of inspiration to the imagery of the project, there is scope to use this inventively rather than slavishly” (uShaka Island, 2002e:32). Thus, in true postmodern eclecticism, symbols and signs of indigenous culture are used as they suit the developers to serve their particular purposes.⁷ Thus, picking and choosing what is suitable, the park does not hold up any semblance of cultural accuracy but rather perpetuates a cultural myth. Through the design of uShaka Marine World, mythic notions of Africanity are coerced into a theme park environment which operates and is based on capitalist experience. uShaka Marine World is a microcosm of the discursively created 'Kingdom of the Zulu' “theme park” (KZNTA, 2002v). As a mini, material 'Kingdom of the Zulu', uShaka Marine World draws on the same stereotypical and ruralised history of Africanity which plagues its larger model.

Not forgetting that rural African imagery is privileged and foregrounded, the developers incorporate the politically correct language of multiculturalism into their rhetoric, publicly aiming to create a “rich cultural ‘tapestry’” (uShaka Island, 2002e:9). Dobson (Interview, 2003) observes that many were initially against the multicultural, ‘African’ theme of uShaka Marine World. Yet these opinions were apparently unheeded. Accordingly, the “overall design theme is indigenous and multicultural in its use of colour, building materials, layout and aesthetics” (uShaka Island, 2002a:1). The park’s

⁷ See Wiggins (2004) for a discussion of uShaka Marine World from a postmodern theoretical perspective.

'multicultural' foundation is supposedly supported by "the cultural profile of visitors and users" (uShaka Island, 2002c:32). Indeed, Molinar (Interview, 2003) suggests that uShaka Marine World provides a multicultural environment that exhibits the best part of what Durban is all about (in his opinion, African/ Zulu elements and the sea/ Point/ harbour environment) in the production of an fantasy environment divorced from daily concerns. However, as in de Oliver's (2001:244) San Antonio example, "commodified multiculturalism does not require the physical presence of cultural 'others' – just that of their commodified symbols". This inclusion of multiculturalism could either point to a flippant bandying about of a popular buzzword to buy acceptance for/ into the product or, the developers could be genuinely concerned with avoiding essentialising ethnicity.

To be sure, at face value, the development does seem to avoid exoticising particular groupings of people. Unlike the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' promotional logo and literature, no overtly iconic representations of humans are provided. People do not feature in the branding, design or promotional representations of the marine park. This is most positive. People feature only as potential visitors and here the promotional material is careful to construct visitors as coming from a wide societal range. Hence, all races are featured in the promotional images and a story featuring three children's visit to the park names the children Jabu, Jack and Jay implying that they are from different cultural groups (Gibson, 2002d).

However, it could be argued that despite this, the uShaka Marine World experience actually contributes to colonialist representations of indigenous culture (and

its relationship with 'Zulu' royalty) which fosters unrealistic tourist expectations of Africanity. Cultural references to colonial notions of Africanity are not far absent. For example, the uShaka Marine logo (see Figure 6.5) is comprised of a shark swimming above a shield-like shape on which the name of the marine park is emblazoned. The shield is a reminder of indigenous, black African culture. It is a visual link to the shields of the KZNTA's logos both past and present (see Figures 5.1 and 5.2 in the previous chapter). In this way, it subtly



Figure 6.5: uShaka Marine World Logo (SAAMBR, 2006)

connects the discursive sphere of rural Africa, promoted by the KZNTA, to its material reality – uShaka Marine World. Thus, the reproduction of the shield symbol locates the marine park within the accepted, rural, colonial image parameters of Durban's identity.

The image of the shark suspended above the shield also encourages a range of associations which cleverly insert the marine theme park into indigenous tropes as the argument below explores.

The contention that indigenous culture is treated in a neocolonial fashion requires support and takes its lead from the park's endorsement by King Goodwill Zwelithini who officially launched the development. At the launch, King Zwelithini observed that uShaka Marine World marked the "turning point" for Durban and would "change the face of provincial tourism for ever" (Cole, 2001:1). His ratification is critical in linking the uShaka Marine World tourist space to the wider space of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu'. His approval cements the project with a cultural authenticity and connects the project to a mythical legacy (perpetuated by bodies like the KZNTA) of 'Zuluness' in the province. Moreover, the promotional literature points out that "in case anybody is worried His Majesty King Goodwill Zwelithini has been approached and given his royal approval for the use of the uShaka terminology, as is directed by Royal Household protocol" (Gibson, 2002a:12). This further legitimises both the park's name and the development itself and imbricates the project within popular 'Zulu' history.

The naming of the marine park development is crucial to the figuring of Africanity and 'Zuluness' in the project. According to the promotional information, the name and naming of uShaka Marine World "is riddled with local indigenous connections that make the name appropriate for the city" (Gibson, 2002a:12). Arguably the first connotation of the uShaka Marine World name, especially given the context of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu', is to Shaka himself. Indeed, as the uShaka Marine World promotional literature claims, the "term has direct links with the great King Shaka Zulu – a historical name known around the world and one that is intimately connected with this region" (Gibson, 2002a:12). To many South Africans and certainly to international tourists, the name uShaka Marine World will immediately associate the site with the image of Shaka with all its attendant romanticisations. This is the obvious meaning of the term and one cannot but assume that those responsible for choosing the name of the park were keen to capitalise on such associations. Even the KZNTA contend that one of the reasons for the marine park's name was to align it to the 'Zulu Kingdom' (Seymour Interview, 2002). The site development plan asserts: "Indeed, the project takes its branded name 'uShaka Marine Park' from the illustrious warrior king of the Zulu, Shaka" (uShaka Island, 2002e:32). Yet Brink (Interview, 2002) counters that uShaka Marine World is actually not named after Shaka; although, he admits, the name has convenient

connotations with Shaka and links nicely to the Zulu, African theme of the park. Rather, the name is drawn from the isiZulu word 'ushaka' meaning shark (Brink Interview, 2002). Notwithstanding this, Molinar (Interview, 2003) and Sutcliffe (Interview, 2003) both agree that the name certainly plays on both meanings.

The promotional literature contends that "in African folklore the sea commands great respect. It is where the secrets of the earth's creator are kept, from where the sun mystically rises. The sea is believed to be a living, breathing creature confirmed every day in its ebb and flow of tides" (Gibson, 2002a:12). In this context, the uShaka Marine World developers would claim, the isiZulu "term 'ushaka' is used semantically and phonetically to depict the large marine creature for which mankind has greatest respect – sharks" (Gibson, 2002a:12). This rationale is endorsed by Zwelithini (cited in Kearney, 2001) who confirms that in both religious practice and traditional African folklore, the sea is of great importance and that the shark garners paramount respect on account of its being symbolic of Shaka.

Clearly, the similarity between 'uShaka' (referring to the person) and 'ushaka' (meaning shark) raises an interesting onomastic question. Consultation of a number of contemporary isiZulu-English dictionaries listed the isiZulu word for shark as 'umfingo'. Thus, Adrian Koopman, a Professor of isiZulu at the University of Natal⁸, was contacted for further clarification. Koopman (Interview, 2002a) provides the following explanation:

Tradition has it that King Shaka's name (noun class 1a u-Shaka) is derived from the class 5 noun i-shaka which has a number of related meanings: i. stomach-ache, swollen stomach; ii. early pregnancy; iii. small scarabaceus beetle swallowed to cure night-wetting. This last-named beetle is also believed to be related to the swollen stomach of meaning (i). Tradition also has it that when ambassadors from the eLangeni clan (of which Shaka's mother Nandi was a princess) arrived at the Zulu clan to tell King Senzangakhona (Shaka's father) that he had impregnated Nandi, his reply was that she was simply suffering from an 'i-shaka' (i.e. a beetle-caused swollen stomach). Hence the transfer of this noun to the name class 1a when the child was later born: i-shaka > u-Shaka.

⁸ In 2004 the Universities of Natal and Durban-Westville merged to form the University of KwaZulu-Natal.

There are earlier words for 'shark' in the Zulu lexicon, such as 'imfingo', but for a number of years now the loan-word (borrowing, adoptive) 'ushaka' has been used. It is not in Doke and Vilakazi's 1948 dictionary, but it is in the 1969 Dent and Nyembezi dictionary, so the word has been around for a while.

Given the fact that only a capital letter separates the name of the king from the marine predator, you can see the opportunity for word games linking King Shaka to the oceans (sic) 'ushaka'.

This explanation reveals a number of interesting issues. Firstly, while Brink (Interview, 2002) is keen to stress that the marine park is named after the marine predator, the spelling of the name suggests otherwise. The capital letter 'S' in uShaka Marine World actually denotes Shaka as opposed to the shark. According to the spelling of the word, the marine meaning would not assume primacy. Secondly, to non-isiZulu speakers, the association to Shaka would be paramount. Thirdly, if those concerned with the uShaka Marine World development were in fact not wishing to capitalise on 'Zulu' royal connotations, the original term for shark, 'imfingo' could have been used. Fourthly, 'ushaka' is a loan-word from English. Thus, colonial penetration into the isiZulu language has resulted in changes to that language. Therefore, the word 'ushaka' has a history which is influenced by colonialism. Fifthly, the conflation between shark and Shaka falls into the common marketing mentality that assumes that indigenous ways of life are shared with 'wild' animals. As we have seen in the context of both the provincial and urban 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign, the 'wild' and the 'primitive' are both seen to exist outside of time and history. Existing independently of civilisation, both indigenous culture and wild animals are seen to be the objects of an undifferentiated gaze. This is a myth perpetuated by Zwelithini's observations of the shark being emblematic of Shaka (Kearney, 2001). Thus, in the frames already set up for tourism promotion and projection in both KwaZulu-Natal and Durban, the shark/ Shaka play on words is perfect. In true postmodern eclecticism, the signifiers uShaka/ ushaka do have multiple meanings and associations but these cannot be glibly brushed aside. Certainly the multiplicity of meanings is indicative of Durban's postcolonial context. In fact, rather than the park being named after the shark and its reference to Shaka being coincidental, it could be argued that the marine reference is the coincidental and convenient one since the park will house an oceanarium. The more important meaning, from a marketing point of view, is that of Shaka. Indeed, proposals have even been discussed for the erection of a statue of Shaka at this development (Cole, 2001). Associating the marine park with

Shaka links the park to stereotypical and colonial views of indigenous culture. This connection is both overt and subtle. Notwithstanding, it cannot be ignored as it promotes particular, colonially-inspired conceptions of African identity and invokes particular sets of economic dependencies.

The iconic image of the 'Zulu warrior' and Shaka are constantly exploited for profit. The uShaka Marine World development, despite protestations to the contrary, does exactly that. Linking sharks to Shaka also has more nefarious connections as well. As Koopman (Interview, 2002a) suggests: "the shark is often seen as a powerful, vicious, bloodthirsty despot of the sea; for well over a hundred years Shaka was also seen like this by colonial writers". Past colonialists built their careers on conveying particular notions of the 'warrior Zulu' and Shaka in particular. In the revisionist state of popular history, this view no longer takes precedence. Rather, a more romantic but equally problematic conception is widely used to build the careers and bank balances of new colonialists – neocolonialists! Trying to attract the itinerant tourist, developers such as those responsible for uShaka Marine World, neocolonially enforce stereotypical conceptions of 'Zulu' and rural African culture for monetary gain. Thus, once again, Africinity is captured, not as a vibrant, contemporary urban culture but as a ruralised, romantic and mythical conception. It associates a contemporary urban venue which is devoted to pleasure and leisure with a mythical figure in the vein of popular conceptions of rural indigenous culture as promoted by bodies like the KZNTA. The suggestion that the link between uShaka Marine World and ideas produced by the KZNTA is merely coincidental is dispelled when it becomes apparent that Neels Brink was, at one stage during uShaka Marine World's early development, concurrently Chairman of the KZNTA and a principal figure within Moreland Developments. Brink was heavily involved in leading the KZNTA in discursively charting notions of identity construction within both KwaZulu-Natal and Durban. Moreover, his development company is involved in building and developing uShaka Marine World and the Point Precinct. Discursive ideas promulgated in one environment have material manifestation in the built fabric of Durban. To dismiss this as coincidental would be to ignore the nature of identity construction in the province. uShaka Marine World is intrinsically, conceptually and practically linked to 'Kingdom of the Zulu' ideologies. Moreover, it illustrates the manner in which culture and identity can shape the built environment and, in turn, inform notions of identity.

In Durban, processes of representation are controlled by organisations such as the KZNTA and uShaka Marine World. As this narrative has illustrated, Durban is currently presented in terms of a paradisaal setting occupied by indigenous people and as an adventure playground. Through the continuing imposition of artificial cultural values, meanings and forms, both the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and the uShaka Marine World development packages inappropriate and irresponsible images for tourist consumption. Ethnicity, royalty, aboriginality, landscape and wildlife are commodified, sanitised, romanticised and divested of true representation. Hence, false cultural representations and economic dependencies are perpetuated by the KZNTA and the uShaka Marine World developers. As a result, both colonial and neocolonial discourses are set in motion within the space of Durban, materially inscribed and discursively reinserted into the identity of the city.

Tourism marketing of Durban must be actively challenged. Bodies like the KZNTA and uShaka Marine World should look for ways to become more culturally responsible in their promotion of Durban while still deriving economic benefit from the images they place in circulation. The discursive 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and the material uShaka Marine World should be re-conceptualised to rely less on rural, colonial notions of indigenous culture and landscape. In Durban, part of this involves democratising the power relations of representation leading to the refashioning of tourist images around more meaningful, local, urban conceptions of identity. The discursive ideas circulating from this refashioned strategy could introduce new possibilities of branding Durban as a desirable tourism destination and would have the potential to transform its urban spaces. Such alternatives are considered in the following chapter.

Discussion: Implications

Discursive institutions like the KZNTA and material urban manifestations such as uShaka Marine World appropriate Durban's landscape with their commodified versions of identity. This commodified identity is fluid and has little in common with a contemporary, urban African identity. It is powerful precisely because of its easy assimilation into the mainstream market at consumer sites like uShaka Marine World. Thus, African identity, in its dominant figuring in Durban, is based on ruralised, traditional, exotic and indigenous aspects of a commodified culture.

In effect, the African identity supported by Durban's residents is somewhat uncanny in the sense of the term as discussed in Chapter 2. The identity offered is familiar because it is based on a continuation of cultural domination since the first colonisers but it is simultaneously strange or unfamiliar because it is divorced from current realities. Hence, the striving to formulate African conceptions of self to ease the uncanny malaise affecting society. As outlined in Chapter 2, Gelder and Jacobs (1998) warn against the pitfalls of reconciliation in this regard and suggest that reconciliation and its impossibility should exist in a productive but unstable dynamic. While Gelder and Jacobs (1998) refuse the language of reconciliation, resolution, difference and unity, these concepts are often invoked in multiculturalist discourses in South Africa. However, the discursive-material dualism (as evidenced in the KZNTA-uShaka Marine World identity construction) largely results in an eclectic combination of conservative (assimilationist), liberal (Anglo-centric) and left-liberal multiculturalism (exoticising) and there is little evidence of critical, resistance and insurgent multiculturalism or a creolised space (Dunn et al., 2001; Nuttall & Michael, 2000; McLaren, 1994). This is manifest within a broader South African (problematic) insertion into the myth of the rainbow nation (Ballard, 2002a; Brown, 2001; Erasmus, 2001; Nuttall & Michael, 2000). Certainly, multiculturalism, as evident in discursive and material sites of identity in Durban, seems to coerce mainstream Durban identity towards an assimilationist, Anglo-centric identity which exoticises difference whilst operating within a racial hierarchy (de Oliver, 2001).

The general position within Durban is to exoticise black African 'Otherness' (and to a lesser extent other cultural formations such as Indianness). As Watson (1996) observes in the Australian context, where public space (like uShaka Marine World) can be rendered exotic, less resistance to difference is encountered than when public space is rendered barbaric (for example, as the site of ritual cattle-killing [Ballard, 2002a, 2002b]). In South Africa, multiculturalism seems not to be about wholesale inclusion of difference but rather about including the indigenous and the exotic. Within the supposed multiculturalist milieu in Durban, selling Durban has meant obscuring poverty. For Robins (2000), South African multiculturalist discourse heavily relies on exoticised and ahistorical notions of traditional Africanity which results in the obscuring of contemporary reality, a claim that is easily substantiated in the (D)urban context.

It is precisely this kind of exotic multiculturalism which de Oliver (2001) takes to task in his study linking multiculturalism to the doctrine of privilege based on

race. The discursive-material valuation of African cultural aesthetics is not reflected in the underlying economic and spatial demographics of Durban. uShaka Marine World as a market-driven initiative is based on commodified rural African identity which gives rise to a “systemic conception of multiculturalism that [can] functionally integrate traditional expressions of racial hierarchy” (de Oliver, 2001:236). The situation in Durban’s uShaka Marine World amply illustrates de Oliver’s (2001) assertion that in this context multiculturalism is sold not lived! de Oliver’s (2001:250) comments regarding San Antonio have relevance to Durban and bear repetition here:

the 20th-century patterns of urban development – characterised by decentralisation, suburbanisation, and inner city racialization – have been extended to the point that a place is produced that addresses the psychological ramifications attributable to the industrial character which promoted these patterns, in this case a place that markets...aesthetics free of the cultural group which generated them...commodified multiculturalism is a direct expression of consumer culture social relations in which commodified aesthetics have penetrated general socialisation to the extent that a[n]...identity is just another aesthetic fused to a commodity, to be offered in the marketplace like any other. And, just like the consumer who wishes to purchase a tamale or Kung Pao chicken to enjoy its exotic flavour, the direct presence or knowledge of the cultural community and the cultural politics that produced it are unnecessary to the experience.

The Point Precinct, dominated by the uShaka Marine World complex, is unashamedly a theme park “where visiting consumers elect to spend their money on a selection of themes on display and available for purchase” (de Oliver, 2001:250). Elements such as the oceanarium (although ostensibly ‘sold’ as an educational offering) and the water park merely serve “to broaden the culture menu of commodified experiences from which the mainstream market can select” (de Oliver, 2001:252).

As Head (cited in Nash, 2002) would have it, imagery and myth disseminated in the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ campaign are woven into very grounded outcomes (such as uShaka Marine World) and social processes leading to the re-inscription of these ideologies in the discursive realm of Durban city identity. In this vein, Hall (1998:28) argues that the “propagation of image by cities necessitates a process of social exclusion in the imagination of new urban identities”. This is crucial, for this thesis has illustrated how constructions of African identity and citizenship have both

discursively and materially resulted in the alienation of certain people. In addition, "place promotion involves the appropriation and sanitisation of contested place and social histories and identities, reconstructing them around notions of what constitutes an 'official' urban image" (Hall, 1998:28).

In this context, citizenship becomes problematic in Durban as a socialisation process is operationalised with the result that certain people are excluded from the dominant picture (Dunn et al., 2001). Oktay (2002) contends that the urban experience is the collective experience of places and spaces. As has been illustrated in the case of uShaka Marine World, collective experience is not always possible (as certain people are excluded from the area during development and gating the attractions restricts others). In this context, Bremner (2004:135) argues that "Public space, public amenities and urban citizenship will become things of the past. Privately owned spaces...will increasingly function as its civic squares, but never assume its civic responsibilities". If, as Oktay (2002:264) would have it, "the quality of urban public space...has a significant role in making the identity of a city", then the quality of the restricted uShaka Marine World, ostensibly set up as a 'public' place for all Durbanites, significantly contributes to a restricted and qualified Durban identity.

However, considering that the Africanity promoted is based on traditional and colonial conceptions of African culture and the lack of African urbanity, it is difficult to appreciate this identity as truly African. The identity projected by the KZNTA and uShaka Marine World development is one that is more aligned with privatised, corporate globalisation than anything else. In the frame of globalisation, cultural difference is recycled and promoted worldwide with minor differences. In this context, Durban's African identity seems to be more about accessing a place in the globalised niche of commodities. Africanity, in its ruralised, traditional form is sellable. A contemporary definition of urban Africanity is rarely portrayed in mainstream depictions of Durban's 'African' identity. Thus, claiming an African status is difficult to comprehend when clearly little understanding of what the conceptual category 'African' actually entails has been undertaken.

Postcolonial cities are often the sites of the most intense contestation of citizenship. These cities form the locations where identities from the colonial past are negotiated. The city is often bombarded with representational spaces (such as those created materially by the uShaka Marine World developers or discursively by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu') which attempt to produce an ideal postcolonial citizen. Urban

forms, architecture and naming city sites have emerged as social and political means of representation which mediate the colonial past and postcolonial present (Yeoh, 2001). Sadly, developments predicated on capitalist gain such as uShaka Marine World do little to destabilise segregation in Durban. As a result, Durban, like other postcolonial cities, traces "continuity rather than disjuncture from its colonial predecessor in the nature and quality of social encounters, which are shot through with notions of 'race' and 'culture' as markers of difference and bases of interaction" (Yeoh, 2001:460). The identity politics of postcolonial cities like Durban are thus constituted by colonialism as well as the possibility of the postcolonial moment (Jacobs, 1996).

Thus, postcolonial city identity is contradictory, ironic and anxious about claims of authenticity and at the same time is paradoxically constituted by both a rejection and fairly unproblematic identification with colonialism's cultural formations (Yeoh, 2001). Anxious to assert its Africanity while simultaneously rejecting and imbibing the culture of colonialism, Durban is currently grappling with its postcolonial identity. The past, in both its colonial and subconscious forms, is continually married to the present in Durban. This is evident in the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and material urban forms such as uShaka Marine World. Space and architecture can be interrogated "for its embodiment of colonial constructions and categories in order to reveal the postcolonial condition" (Yeoh, 2001:459). Thus, examining the design imagery of the uShaka Marine World complex reveals a systematic imbrication of colonial ideologies and a mythic conception of the past. This reveals the immediacy of the postcolonial moment in Durban; for, as Yeoh (2001) has argued, urban space can negotiate identities and histories which are factually incorrect. Postcolonial identity politics may thus work at recovering an alternative history (Prakah, cited in Yeoh, 2001). Certainly, the postcolonial identity politics at work currently in Durban are inviting a traditional conception of wild, primitive, adventurous African identity which is scarcely based on fact.

As a result citizenship is still up for negotiation. Hence, Bouillon (2002) argues that in Durban citizenship can be used as a means of discrimination and injustice. In Durban, the historical local city has symbolically been opposed to its rural hinterland (as well as to its townships). This results in black African Durbanites being symbolically and legally denied access to both the city and citizenship (Bouillon, 2002). The 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and the uShaka Marine World development continue this juxtaposition of the urban to the rural and symbolically deny black South

Africans *de facto* Durban citizenship. This juxtaposition has historical links to apartheid and colonialism which considered black African urbanity as anathema. Indeed, these ideas are inherently intertwined with colonial representations of Africa which persist in contemporary media and textbook representations of the continent as discussed in Chapter 3. This perception is also perpetuated by tourism and museums (Norton, 1996; Rassool & Witz, 1996; White, 1995) and clearly evidenced in the case of Durban. These depictions contribute to a perception of an imagined Africa that is wild, paradisaical and occupied by primitive people. Certainly, the discursive-material dualism at work in Durban inserts the city into this ideology and does little to destabilise these (mis)conceptions.

Thus, as the black South African is still viewed as transient in the context of the city, citizenship as a substantial and practical local membership is still at stake in Durban (Bouillon, 2002). Restricting access to spaces such as uShaka Marine World and pushing the poor from redevelopment spaces at the Point means that citizenship is still contested for black African Durbanites. Grest (2002) agrees that there is a gap between ideas of citizenship held by the elite (those in charge of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and uShaka Marine World) and the newly enfranchised black African majority. For the latter group, Grest (2002:33) contends that is "unlikely that any modern sense of citizenship exists". He argues that while there

are undoubtedly, many other strongly articulated identities and practices related to the use of space...none of these would involve a sense of belonging to an established community with common interests and goals revolving around a strongly developed politics of place (Grest, 2002:33).

Thus, true African urbanity is still unspecified and certainly cannot be defined by Durban's marketers according to their current frameworks. Only through a thorough incorporation of the black African underclass and through equal access to citizenship can cities such as Durban offer an African urbanity which is based on the textured nature of its inhabitants, rather than conforming to outdated colonial ideologies which privilege race as signifiers of citizenship.

However, such a textured nature of African urbanity is absent in mainstream, privatised Durban where colonialism operates through commodified cultural imperatives and the making of identity occurs through discursive and representational spheres. Durban's urbanity is thus constructed and shaped by a discursive-material dualism which operates to render a particular postcolonial identity. Clearly,

representations from the colonial past persist in the postcolonial present where 'whites' (masters), 'Zulus' (primitives) and 'Indians' (exotic) are stereotypically imagined and portrayed in terms of an imagined multiculturalism instead of an imagined community (Yeoh, 2001). This multiculturalism is positively interpreted to position the postcolonial city as cosmopolitan (i.e. tolerant, harmonious, diverse but not divided) in the elaboration of city ideology (Yeoh, 2001). Instead of developing a sense of connective aesthetics, colonial representations persist and are often reworked (Nash, 2002; Cook et al., 2000). (D)urban heritage continues to be inspired by colonially inherited ideas which position the urban within the conventions of rurality, paradise and unchanging 'primitive' culture. This results in an effective sanitisation, romanticisation and homogenisation of urban identity.

Moving Away from the Privatised

Durban's postcolonial identity, as an identity in formation, is most contradictory and challenging. Exploring the material manifestation of discursive conceptions of identity has revealed a persuasive discursive-material dualism which situates Durban within the colonially inherited tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture. This Part of the thesis has highlighted the limitations and contradictions of an identity based on the ideologies of the KZNTA and uShaka Marine World. African urbanity cannot emerge within the context of the narrow, colonialist portrayals of the KZNTA or the capitalistic commodification of uShaka Marine World.

Zukin (1995) warns against the ghettoisation of inner cities by private investment and public rhetoric. She also reminds that the "very diversity of the population and their need for cultural and economic exchanges create unpredictable spaces of freedom: the markets, restaurant kitchens, designated landmarks, and parades that become both sites and sights of new collective identities" (Zukin, 1995:294). The cultural strategies to be discussed in Part IV differ from the dominant cultural strategies of economic revitalisation and redevelopment evident in sites like uShaka Marine World in that they are more open, fluid and participatory. Hannigan (1998:73) following Goldberger suggests that "Disneyesque landscapes...are filled with consumers of culture...but not with those who make and shape it. In this aspect, they differ from urban districts which are spontaneously colonized by culture producers". This is not to say that the success of these spontaneous initiatives do not attract the attention of city officials who often seek to incorporate these trends into their broader marketing strategies. As

will be discussed, such cultural strategies open up spaces in Durban but it is almost as if the eThekweni Municipality is piggybacking on these efforts rather than driving them.

The cultural strategies presented in the following Part are valuable in that they are not guided by a private, corporate or public field. Creativity, originality and the desire to change Durban so that it welcomes diverse groups drive such cultural strategies from the bottom up. Profit is not the motivating force and this creates a different set of dynamics. While Durban's cultural practitioners do receive funding at times, on the whole these urban cultural landscapers form a grassroots movement engaged in negotiating, landscaping and shaping African urban space and identity without much external financial aid. The point is to look at the dynamics that are trying to be achieved. In the case of uShaka Marine World, it is development of a privatised, profitable urban space. On the other hand, the cultural strategies to be considered in Part IV aim to reinvigorate and open up the existing urban fabric of Durban to those who live in it.

Zukin (1995) suggests that a cultural city must be a site where art is produced, consumed and sold. Zukin (1995:151) stresses that if "vision is the source of power in the symbolic economy, it is impossible to ignore the collective power of cultural producers". The cultural producers' vision outlined in Part IV can in some way challenge the vision of ruralised African tropes promulgated by private-public partnerships in Durban and create a more inclusive, relevant city for Durban's residents and tourists. This outcome is vital for "urban public spaces are...crucibles of national identity" (Zukin, 1995:262).

Together Chapters 5 and 6 have explored the combined effects of the marketing amplitude of the KZNTA and uShaka Marine World. The chapters have stressed how, by virtue of a persuasive discursive-material dualism, representations of Durban's urbanity and identity are invested with ruralised, colonially-inspired qualities. While this is a powerful construct, it does not go unchallenged. There are many cultural practitioners whose work is aimed at revealing Durban's urban African identity. In the final Part of this thesis, the narrative considers alternative opportunities for reinvigorating African conceptions of identity and urbanity in Durban.

Part IV

The Art of (D)urban Africanity

"There is precious, passionate belief among those remaining art producers and makers in Durban that the city has more than the surf and the pale imitations of kraals to offer" (Pather, 2005a:7).

"No gumboot dancers. No happy natives jumping up and down. It begins with an old black woman planting a seed. And it ends with a squatter camp covered in pumpkins" (Happy Natives; Coetzee, 2003:58).

"Cities are good places for the beginnings of stories" (Tim Etchells for Forced Entertainment, in Kaye, 2000:14).

Having appreciated the theoretical concerns manifest in the literature on the postcolonial and African city in Part II and identifying how Durban has been discursively and materially reinvented through traditionalised, ruralising codes in Part III, the discussion presently suggests that there is significant scope for reinvigorating African urbanity within the context of Durban. The final chapters in this narrative thus confront the limited representations of Durban's identity and urbanity circulated by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and uShaka Marine World by offering creolised, urban alternatives.

In so doing, Part IV takes up Yeoh's (2001:464) challenge to geographers that postcolonial urban geography should be harnessed to the wider project of "constructing and elaborating alternative postcolonial geographical traditions". As Yeoh (2001) rightly points out, these new traditions are necessary for understanding the sensibilities and politics of the urban, postcolonial world. By reflecting on a number of cultural efforts that are reinvigorating Durban's African urbanity, Part IV seeks to contribute to new ways of reading the postcolonial African city. The following chapters thus form a collection of narrative slices from which to read Durban's built fabric and identity. In opposition to the dominant, official story of Durban, "an extraordinary and surprising South Africa is becoming increasingly visible as the vast array of local stories are told" (Annecke & Swilling, 2004:302). The following chapters read these stories from both a descriptive and analytical perspective. Together, they detail cultural endeavours that are distinctive of the African identity of the city. This is exciting methodologically for

it implies that the African city is not static but rather interesting and dynamic in and of itself.

Chapters 7 and 8 fit closely together and should be read as a whole. In confronting the co-constituting relationship between identity and urbanity, the chapters tell a story of organic, creolised, African urban transformation; the moral for policy-makers being that urban cultural regeneration need not rely on iconic or flagship developments. Accordingly, Chapter 7 is concerned with concrete and visual cultural strategies that reinvest the urban landscape with a sense of the African present. It thus considers urban renewal and graphic design initiatives which inaugurate new urban representational codes in Durban. A hallmark of the African city is that it is visceral. Consequently, Chapter 8 contemplates performance and musical art which physically encounters the space of Durban and alters it. Finally, Chapter 9 provides a summary of the entire narrative progression and concludes with a brief personal reflection.

Part IV highlights the importance of paying increased attention to cultural approaches that organically shape postcolonial African cities and our understandings of them. Beyond their transformative capacity, these efforts bring a sense of Durban's cultural vibrancy to the fore. Furthermore, they offer fresh counterpoints to tired, stereotypical imaginings of Africanity and point to a creolised present and future that can be represented and engaged with through a multitude of novel and exciting postcolonial, African urban stories. As Annecke and Swilling (2004:302) contend, the "challenge will be to defend the space for these stories, or live with the consequences of codifying a single official story". The following chapters make space for initiating a telling of these alternative stories.

7

Designing African Urbanity

Introduction

This chapter initiates a two-part reading of a number of cultural activities that are transforming Durban's identity and urbanity. In order to read Durban's African urban culture and identity, the chapter brings the postcolonial and creolisation literature into conversation with that of culture-led urbanisation, suggesting that this sheds light on the manner in which creative activities can transform urban space. Furthermore, the chapter considers the role of cultural endeavours in landscaping Durban's contours as a creolised, African city. Having laid the theoretical groundwork, the chapter then focuses on the re-imagining of the urban African city through urban planning and graphic design. It is therefore concerned with the influence that alternative concrete and visual strategies have on Durban's space. This reading is to be considered in tandem with that of Chapter 8 which focuses on cultural approaches that encounter Durban on a far more visceral level. By reflecting on various cultural efforts that are reinvigorating Durban's urbanity and identity, both chapters seek to elaborate and construct an alternative, urban, postcolonial, geographical tradition.

Reading African Urban Cultures and Identities

Durban's identity is in a state of constant flux and various cultural practitioners within the city are attempting to productively explore the weave and textures of this identity. If one looks away from the iconic towards the organic, what stories can be told? These alternative stories of Durban stem from, as the introduction to this narrative points out, the notion that the city itself is a cultural archive. The literature outlined in Chapter 2 observes that discourses of 'rainbow nation' multiculturalism have masked the creolisations and imbrications inherent in South African identities and cities. It is suggested that reading the urban as an open space of creolisation can initiate new ways of reading and thinking about urban spaces which, in the process, disturb commonly held (mis)conceptions of African urbanity. Moreover the literature suggests, as Chapter 4 points out, that postcolonial cultural readings in the past have generally focused on difference. Creolisation is a powerful theoretical tool in underwriting the

intricate processes of building connections. Yet the literature highlights that too often the cultural dimensions of the city, its city life and form, are ignored. Chapter 4 attempts to address part of this by casting a revisionist's eye on Durban's pre-colonial society, culture and space. In this manner, the chapter reveals the imbricated nature of Durban's identity, culture and form and discusses the way in which the colonialists sought to disguise these creolisations by imposing a Eurocentric culture and spatial form.

The project of reading the African city, in this case Durban, needs to be extended through to the present as a counterpoint to the colonial representations of the city which are predicated on ruralised, essentialist versions of African culture. Certainly, as Gunner (2003) contends, there are a myriad cultural texts and practices which write into and impinge on urban space. Such texts, including dance, performance, music and graphic design, will be discussed with the aim of addressing the paucity of cultural research addressed at the city scale in terms of city life and form. This task is important in illustrating that the link between Africanity and urbanity is indeed quite strong. Through art, defined in the broadest sense, people can re-appropriate and reclaim the physical space of the city (Gunner, 2003). For this reason, art provides a fecund source for comprehending city-culture and urban identities.

In order to read Durban's identity more closely, one needs to harness understandings of postcolonialism and creolisation to the literature on culture, cities and culture-led urban regeneration. There is, of course, a growing literature regarding employing culture as an urban economic strategy. As previously mentioned, a recent special issue of *Urban Studies* (42:5-6) is devoted to the subject. Yet, such literature predominantly focuses on using culture and cultural industries as drivers to regenerate cities, particularly in terms of local economic development, job creation and social cohesion in the developed world. Whilst not neglecting the social, physical and economic effects of culture-led regeneration, any discussion of the subject should have culture at its centre. For, if the main point is to attract tourists rather than enhance a city's cultural and artistic life, support for cultural activities is easily dispensable in favour of global sporting events, international conventions and conferences (García, 2005). Culture-led regeneration is most successful when it is underpinned by cultural – not economic – imperatives which stimulate a sense of ownership and consequently become sources of local pride and identity (Bailey, Miles & Stark, 2004). Moreover, Miles, (2005a) suggests that positioning culture as a panacea to urban problems is perhaps a rather romantic notion.

It must be noted that the Northern-centric focus of such work, while raising valuable theoretical points, does not fully speak to the imperatives which underscore issues in the South. As the majority of the *Urban Studies* papers display, culture-led regeneration in Europe has a long, formalised and institutionalised history. In the South, these processes are far more ad hoc and piecemeal. Perhaps because of this less has been written on the subject in terms of the developing world, although Yeoh's (2005) piece is the sole exception in the *Urban Studies* special issue. She is joined, in the South African context, by Dirsuweit (1999a) and, to a lesser extent, by Rogerson (2003) whose focus considers cultural strategies as part of broader tourism revitalisation planning.

The present story of Durban is not solely about using culture and cultural industries to revitalise the urban landscape. Of course, regeneration is not an unwanted by-product of culture; yet, the narrative is equally concerned about identity itself and how the city, i.e. Durban, is sculpted. Where does this leave the urban reader? On the one hand, there is a set of theory which predominantly offers economic perspectives on culture. On the other hand, postcolonialism offers cultural perspectives which can potentially identify points of creolisation and connection. It is only when one brings the two literatures together in conversation with one another, that really interesting comments about urbanity can be made. Of crucial importance to the narrative is how culture creates and sustains new African urban forms. Notwithstanding this, part of these comments relate to the bigger picture about whether culture can or should be co-opted into cultural local economic development strategies. Provisionally, this answer should be in the affirmative as the cultural opportunities discussed below illustrate an organic path and highlight opportunities where culture can revitalise space and identity. It is in this sense that the postcolonial critique can productively assist policy-makers.

The present narrative tackles whether there are ways of being good and bad with culture. Instead of merely critiquing hegemonic private-public sector initiatives and developments, if one can read back and extract principles from the bottom up, theories of postcolonialism and creolisation can initiate a far more fruitful contemplation of the discourses of African urbanness and offer some alternatives to policy-makers. Studies of cultural-led urban regeneration have reached a cul-de-sac. The postcolonial focus can illuminate these issues in a way which is relevant not only to African cities but more generally to other cities in the so-called Third World. It can even speak beyond that to researchers and policy-makers in former centres of colonialism in terms of

understanding the wider co-constituting relationships of urbanity and identity. Indeed, there “are numerous ways of rethinking the metropolis as it is usually thought of in the global north by taking on board the realities of, as well as innovating theoretically around, aspects of large cities in the south” (Mbembe & Nuttall, 2005:196).

Consequently, this is a story about ‘bottom-up’, organic intervention. A point seemingly absent from the ‘Western’ literature.

At this point, it must be emphasised that in practice the divisions between grassroots and state-sponsored art can be unclear and even messy (Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2005). For example, Mayor Obed Mlaba (2004a) sees the arts as an important site where the development of a common heritage is already occurring in Durban. As will be discussed later, the eThekweni Municipality does sponsor grassroots arts initiatives. Yet simultaneously vast sums are invested in projects like uShaka Marine World. In the competitive city milieu, public-private contributions to the arts should be treated cautiously as their participation “could seriously weaken the ability of the arts to point at alternative notions of ‘the good’” (Bianchini, cited in García, 2005:862). It is important to remember that local governmental provision of new venues or the growth of cultural infrastructure does not necessarily translate into the production of work that is experimental or not led by the market (Miles, 2005a). In addition, as Sharp, Pollock and Paddison (2005:1011) warn, “being drawn into the rhetoric of the city’s marketing promotion” runs the risk of usurping local communities “sense of ownership”.

At the same time, spectacle schemes like uShaka Marine World, which aim to competitively position the city, can occur at the cost of more localised, accessible cultural provision (Evans, 2005). Additionally, local governmental market-led approaches to cultural developments most often – but not inevitably – result in standardised, hyper-real urban landscapes (Miles, 2005b; Jansson, 2003). The identities produced by such efforts serve to “reduce several different visions of local culture into a single vision that reflects the aspirations of a powerful elite and the values, lifestyles, and expectations of potential investors and tourists” (Broudehoux, cited in Miles, 2005b:916).

Flagship or iconic cultural developments rarely engage with residents’ lives or improve them. City image and identity should not remain the preserve of private-public partnership and marketing bodies. Rather, attempts at re-imagining cities should engage with the residents of the city who contribute to its image and identity (Miles, 2005b). Urban spaces ‘rub off’ on residents who “actively construct and construe the experience of their immediate environment which is more than simply the product of

broader cultural processes, but is about the relationship between people and place" (Miles, 2005b:920). Furthermore, a city's cultural identity evolves and shifts over time. For this reason, Miles (2005b) suggests that questions of identity should lie at the centre of discussions about culture-led regeneration.

There is growing awareness that creative enterprises and cultural resources can transform urban space; its implications can match or even surpass those of institutional reform and political struggle (Robinson, 1998b). Indeed, Robinson, (1998b:165) argues that in "representational space we find a spatiality which draws on cultural and historical resources, the possibility and memory of ways of living in spaces other than those dictated by the dominant order". She further argues,

Different people in the city have different resources to draw upon their imaginative reuse and remaking of the city – different histories, different positions. The creative potential embodied in the diverse populations of South Africa's cities would appear to be vast. Surely there is a real possibility of imagining and shaping new kinds of space, of finding spaces transformed, moved, shifted into strangeness, as if a dream (Robinson, 1998b:168).

It is necessary to examine the extent that representational space has been translated into new spaces in Durban.

Nuttall (2004:747) adds to this debate by observing that city life and form is "a narrative of the present, as it appears in the fiction of the 'now'". Culture works in a close relationship with the city. She makes the crucial point that:

Summoning the city – in this case the African city of [Durban] – into our scholarly analysis, is also summoning the question of the now, or the present. Why is this? Partly because the city form – and the city lives to which it gives rise – is the most conducive space to the remaking of culture and identity, because it is the place of most difference – where difference, that is, the juxtaposition of culture, works to revise and reread the orthodox, any stable notion of who is who...it is precisely within a culture of surveillance, or difference, and its legacy, that highly charged border crossings are likely to occur, that people will find ways of walking, unsurveyed. The city, even where it is a space of segmentation or regimentation, is also a space of creolisation (Nuttall, 2004:748).

In addition, Mbembe (cited in Bremner, 2004:13) suggests that cultural practices offer "a self representation of the city, the idea of the city in itself, and thus builds its own identity while exposing itself to the world". Certainly Dirsuweit (1999a:183) concurs that culture

“can ‘turn around’ a city, providing a positive urban image with which city dwellers can form coherent identities”.

Many of Durban’s stories told below display a new wave of creolisation forged through culture, underscoring the importance of postcolonialism and its ability to provide tools to understand such features. In a way, the narrative thus far has not so much been a contribution to the literature presented in Chapter 2 and 3 but an illumination from which alternative geographical traditions can be read. The originality of the narrative lies in the presentation of a study of an African city in all its complexity in order that the sensibilities and politics of the postcolonial city can be understood. Part of the construction of these alternative urban traditions is the identification of urban, cultural alternatives to developments like uShaka Marine World. Understanding Durban through alternative lenses provides clues to comprehending the co-constituting nature of culture and urbanity in a way which does not reinforce old, colonial relations of power.

Thus the text in the following two chapters examines a range of cultural practices which highlight the manner in which urbanity and identity are co-constituting. These cultural practices or series of cultural experiences (dance, music, graphic design, performance art and urban renewal attempts) provide a fascinating set of alternative texts from which to read Durban. In Durban there is scope for the African Renaissance project to be imaginatively linked to the urban. Until now numerous missed opportunities delineate a failure in enabling this link. On a provincial and local marketing level, the ‘Kingdom of the Zulu’ campaign does not push beyond limited stereotypes of African urbanity. Likewise, uShaka Marine World has failed to offer anything novel in representing urbanity. Nevertheless, as Battersby (2003:110) suggests, postcolonialism “may yet find new opportunities to express a counter-dominant experience as the apparent power of global capitalism becomes ossified”. These opportunities may be situated within the artistic genres. Culture then becomes a valuable tool in countering the views of the powerful (Battersby, 2003). The intimate engagement of various performers and artists with Durban’s space both sculpts its urban African contours and challenges urban power relations. Therefore, the following narrative attempts to provide the African Renaissance with a substantive opportunity for forging creative approaches to reinvigorating the urban. Instead of reinventing colonial traditions, this approach offers a quintessentially new, vibrant, urban and cultural approach to understanding the African city.

Cityscapes: Landscaping Durban's Cultural Contours

Durban is discursively and materially produced in a number of fluid ways by encounters that landscape the city's identity and space in a particularly urban and African manner. The discussion presently considers how various bodies – particularly cultural entities – within Durban engage the city and negotiate variegated urban identities, supporting the theory developed thus far that the city both inscribes and is inscribed upon in terms of its identity.

The situation in Durban is not dissimilar to the Asian context where “the cultural imagineering of the city...is both a growing enterprise intimately connected to commodity production and consumerism as well as a fraught terrain, requiring careful negotiation between global modernity, postcolonial sensibilities and nationalist dreams of a utopian future” (Yeoh, 2005:951). However, it is important to remain aware that the “creation of the city image is not only a matter of cultural policy. What the city actually becomes, and how different groups experience it, depend on the activities of social actors” (Jansson, 2003:464). As Yeoh (2005:955-956) suggests,

urban imagineering as a form of cultural globalisation has brought to the fore not only new urban discourses but also oppositional tactics which chisel away at the image and edifice of ‘the global cultural city’. These may not produce counter-hegemonic visions powerful enough to challenge state-led plans and programmes to reshape urban space, but allow the inhabitants of the city to continue to stake multiple claims to the city.

There is increasing recognition that public art contributes to urban restructuring and urban re-imagineering (Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2005). Indeed, art represents the immediate. Urban artists reinvent their culture and identities by drawing on the present (Triulzi, 1996). Public art is defined as “art which has as its goal a desire to engage with its audiences and to create spaces – whether material, virtual or imagined – within which people can identify themselves, perhaps by creating a renewed reflection on community, on the uses of public spaces or on our behaviour within them” (Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2005:1004). Public art is not merely visual but may find expression through soundscapes, mediascapes as well as material spaces. Indeed, Ogude and Nyairo (2005:2) point to the possibility of using the many genres of “popular culture to engage with questions of post-colonial realities, evolving urban identities, and the idea of popular culture as democratic space – as an alternative site which artists and their audiences articulate politics away from officially regulated zones and practices”. In

the South African context, Minty (2006) offers a useful interrogation of public art practice in Cape Town. He suggests that public art can encourage “publics to visualise futures through visual statements that comment on history and memory and reinsert hidden histories into public space, even if only for a short period” (Minty, 2006:434).

Various entities in Durban are actively involved in creating, exploring, negotiating, confronting and constructing new, complex and complicated senses of vernacular urbanity. Through public art (incorporating performance art, dance, music, graphic design and urban renewal programmes), Durban is undergoing a redefinition process on a culturo-spatial level. There is a loose ‘urban cultural collective’ who are encountering the city and constructing new paths and ways of walking and experiencing Durban. Indeed, the creative classes are “playing an increasingly important role in constructing identity for cities and their people” (Miles, 2004:84). Cultural practices landscape the contours of Durban’s space and identity. Sharp, Pollock and Paddison (2005:1020) make the point that it has been too easy for academics and policy-makers “to focus disproportionately on the more spectacular, particularly the iconic, in its ability to reinscribe place”. On the contrary it is in “the interstices – in those places and spaces which are ‘outside’ the dominant discourse of international competitiveness that characterises the big city” that public art can contribute to the “reinscription of local place” (Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2005:1020). This is a vital observation for this narrative which argues that it is in Durban’s interstices that art contributes to a reinscription of local space and identity. Certainly, it is argued that “public art should be able to generate a sense of ownership forging the connection between citizens, city spaces and their meaning as places through which subjectivity is constructed” (Sharp, Pollock & Paddison, 2005:1003). The purpose of the current narrative is also to determine how cultural producers “might contribute critically to processes of urban change”, in the process offering “an alternative form of cultural intervention” (Miles, 2005a:890). In this sense, it is presently apposite to tell various stories of cultural practices which are occurring in Durban in order to read the city’s creolised, urban, African identity and form. In the process, such a reading challenges Durban’s dominant public-private marketing representations.

Planning Culture

The first story of urban change and culture in Durban is perhaps the most tangible. This narrative concerns the landscaping of an African urbanity through the

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eThekweni Municipality's iTRUMP (inner-Thekwini Regeneration and Urban Management Programme) initiative. An example of what Evans (2005) might tentatively term cultural regeneration (i.e. regeneration that integrates cultural activity into a holistic, area-based scheme), iTRUMP highlights the manner in which cultural attitudes inform regeneration on a lesser – but persuasive – scale. iTRUMP works towards two outcomes: "Firstly, that the inner city is economically and physically regenerated, and secondly, that the city is one that the citizens are proud of, and feel comfortable in" (iTRUMP, 2003:2). It is this second aim which is relevant for the purpose of this narrative. iTRUMP has a large mediating effect on how city space is produced, consumed, walked and experienced. Its effect on Durban's cultural landscape is thus significant.

A major component of the iTRUMP initiative is its legitimisation of the informal economy within Durban's physical and cultural space. In this regard, a pilot project has been initiated in Durban's West Street which attempts to accommodate kerbside trading alongside formal business within the inner city. Trading nodes have been extended into the parking areas. These nodes consist of colourful mosaic stalls and benches (see Figure 7.1). The mosaic designs "are based on those of the traditional Zulu carplug – a quintessentially KZN artefact that is increasingly sought-after by collectors of Africana" (Naidoo & Singh, 2003:17). The mosaics were conceived of by Jane du Rand and were executed and installed by local craftspeople and artists. The



Figure 7.1: Trading Nodes, West Street (Photographs by author)

project is important from a cultural skills transferral point of view in that many of the artists initially lacked experience in these techniques (Naidoo & Singh, 2003). The trading nodes, offset from the regular pavement, alleviate pedestrian congestion. Moreover, they literally concretise the presence of informal traders within the city.

iTRUMP Programme Leader Richard Dobson (Interview, 2003) observes that there are twin benefits to these inner city renewal attempts. Aside from dealing with the informal economy, these efforts additionally initiate a new city imaging. In contrast to invoking imagery that makes application to rural Africa, the mosaic project updates traditional symbols by artistically incorporating them into new urban-related forms. Rather than denying the presence of black African traders in the city, these stalls culturally create and delineate a welcoming space for them. More than merely lifting the drab grey shades of the built fabric, the bright tile mosaics inject a sense of urban Africanity into a predominantly modernist landscape. The provision of urban-African inspired street furniture constitutes a financially modest attempt at instituting cultural regeneration at the city scale level. In contrast with the Northern cultural regeneration experience that relies on iconic, flagship developments, cultural re-imaging can occur at more prosaic levels. Yet the outcomes of such visual recoding – in energising the street furniture and instilling pride for the city centre amongst all residents – could potentially speak far more meaningfully to notions of urban African identity than exclusive flagship projects in the vein of uShaka Marine World.

The “Corridors and Precincts of Excellence” project, under which the West Street pilot scheme falls, seeks to redefine Durban’s image on a broader scale. This project identifies Durban’s major vehicular and pedestrian thoroughfares (e.g. West Street), cultural precincts (e.g. the City Hall area) and transport nodes (e.g. Warwick Junction). These corridors and precincts are prioritised in a number of ways. Firstly, they are prioritised in terms of the legibility of Durban, i.e. how one moves around the city. Secondly, the eThekweni Municipality focuses its capital works in these areas as they are Durban’s prime investment nodes. Accordingly, iTRUMP “aims to enhance the surrounding space to improve pedestrian use, trading opportunities, landscaping and visual impact” (iTRUMP, 2003:3). The planting of palm trees interspersed with mini tiled pyramids on a central island in Aliwal Street (see Figure 7.2) is an example of one such initiative (Dobson Interview, 2003). While the island certainly invigorates the street, there are still causes for concern. There is a fascination with planting palm trees in Durban even though they are not indigenous. In architects Claude and Mikula’s (Interview, 2003)

opinion, the municipality's attempt to line Durban's streets with palm trees is thus highly inappropriate. Moreover, the pyramids prohibit any lingering on the island. The architects also suggest that there is a paucity of shelter on pedestrian-orientated streets (Claude & Mikula Interview, 2003). Movement through Durban is thus actively controlled. iTRUMP's schemes manipulate the available space and produce, in pre-determined ways, the manner in which the city is used, walked and experienced. While some might interpret this in a negative light, iTRUMP's activities are contouring a new, textured sense of African urbanity that was previously lacking in Durban. In contrast with the imagery promoted elsewhere by the municipality, iTRUMP's activities in this regard are exciting in their ability to project an urban African meaning on the landscape. Thus, projects such as these begin to lay the foundations for a new public realm image in terms of paving, design, decoration and lighting (Dobson Interview, 2003).

Furthermore, there are a host of managerial and operational factors that surround the maintenance of Durban's assets which indirectly shapes its cultural space and its identity. Often these involve changing people's behaviour. The provision of toilet facilities is a case in point and is currently being addressed as many men in Durban's inner city urinate wherever it suits them. Likewise, traders need to take responsibility for maintaining the cleanliness of their trading spaces and stacking their goods and street furniture overnight. In Warwick Junction, a 'Special Operations Night-time Cleanup' is conducted twice a month. Since 2000, 480 tons of abandoned street furniture and shacks have been removed. Such operations are necessary to allow for general washing and street sweeping by municipal workers at night (Dobson Interview, 2003, 2001). Imaging around aesthetics is also important. Consequently, iTRUMP is concerned with planning how it wants Durban to



Figure 7.2: Aliwal Street Island (Photographs by author)

look in terms of rubbish bins, signage and other street furniture. In its imaging, iTRUMP attempts to landscape Durban with an urban, African feel. Dobson (Interview, 2003) explains iTRUMP's African imaging rationale:

Everybody wants to be an African city but I think we generally believe that and could probably achieve it...An African city is definitively what we think of [ourselves] and I think that goes into our imaging as well...I think and this is the rider before we say it...we're not going to pitch the city low in terms of aesthetic standard but certainly something like the kind of decentralised kind of office node kind of aesthetic of a Sandton¹ or a Gateway² is probably very unlikely to be where we want to be – because there will be some hard pragmatic input factors like wheels and market barrows tend to smash paving. So you've got to be fairly pragmatic about the selection of your materials...So we're certainly not going to look at marble lined streets...You have to make the money go a whole lot further. So it might be a whole series of, kind of, sequential upgrades, slowly adding layer to layer, a bit like fashion really. I mean if one doesn't have a lot of budget, its kind of a layering exercise...The last point would be landscaping. I think the city, because it's got a gentle climate, most things grow quite easily and we are finding that if we have the right level of community consultation...that communities do go and do the landscaping and it actually can soften the city in a very significant way.

Such initiatives, undertaken in the public realm, thus seek to influence Durban's emerging identity. As Sabine Marschall and Shahid Vawda (both senior lecturers in Cultural and Heritage Tourism at the University of Durban-Westville) suggest, these imaging efforts become a marked example of what African urban expressions of identity could entail (Marschall & Vawda Interview, 2002). Importantly, new imaging must be sustainable in terms of cost and maintenance. Some however assert that the iTRUMP effort is merely reactive architecture and little planning is occurring (Claude & Mikula Interview, 2003). Nevertheless, iTRUMP (2003:3) strives "to be proactive rather than reactive, working to stimulate private sector interest while fulfilling the needs of the individuals that use the public spaces". While the new imaging project is incremental, the various initiatives have already achieved success in terms of

¹ Decentralised office, shopping and residential suburb in Johannesburg.

² Gateway Theatre of Shopping is an upmarket mall in the decentralised office, shopping and residential suburb of Umhlanga Ridge in the north of Durban.

re-imagining the inner city and re-mapping its spaces (Dobson Interview, 2001). A crucial component of this success is the mapping of the central city in terms of a new urban, African spatial logic. Imaging the city is thus a crucial component of the entire endeavour. Dobson (cited in Prescott, 2002:28) observes: "What we have tried to do is to regenerate the city by assimilating its people into a new configuration – to celebrate Durban's identity as a truly African city. If this city is going to be part of a transformation, it's in its public spaces that this will happen". Elaborating on this statement, Dobson (Interview, 2003) suggests that

If the city is going to be developmental, it has to look at the tools that its got to do that and my theory is that the land that the city has to play that out on, is essentially the roads and the pavements and its public spaces. So the challenge then is how does it use those to actually bring about that transformation. People in the informal economy, for instance, were essentially deprived of space within the inner city through the apartheid years and now they are still deprived just through economic disadvantage. Land ownership is not going to change radically over time...So just simply because apartheid's gone, doesn't mean that people are now going to be able to have place to trade in the city. So, the use of the pavements and the public spaces has got to be one of the creative challenges. As I say, how can you actually use that tool for many purposes: to bring about transformation, to bring about a genuine belief amongst the citizens that the city is now there for them; its not there excluding them, to still have a vibrant economy so for instance that either the formal or the informal doesn't undermine the other, still to have a vibrant and aesthetically pleasing public realm that allows you to do business in the city in the way that you prefer and doesn't undermine the value of formal properties and then lastly, that it becomes a tourism asset.

By being attune to elements of contemporary urban African culture, iTRUMP's activities could perhaps provide a catalyst for turning around the narrowly formulated 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign (Marschall & Vawda Interview, 2002). To an extent, Durban's marketing machine, the KZNTA and the uShaka Marine World developers have failed to appreciate this. There are plans to attract tourists to Warwick Junction (Canning, 2001; Dobson Interview, 2001). One would imagine that this tourist campaign would not be predicated on traditional displays of 'Otherness' but instead reflect on the contemporary nature of Durban life. In this way, perhaps, stereotypical representations of Africanity (as promoted by the KZNTA and the uShaka Marine World development) will be creatively

and forcefully challenged. The KZNTA (2002m:12) represents Warwick Junction merely in terms of the exotic - as "the site of the 'muthi' market with traditional healers selling fascinating mixtures of indigenous herbs, plants, bark, snake skins, bird wings, crocodile teeth, dolphin skulls and monkey paws". A tour of the area conveys a completely different perspective. Visiting Warwick Junction one is confronted by a myriad different people, social practices and ways of life – indicative of the variety within Durban itself.

iTRUMP therefore seeks to culturally encode Durban's urbanity with elements of Africanity. These codes influence the way the city is experienced on a practical and emotional manner. The economic spectrum has broadened, destabilising cultural notions of belonging in the central city. The city's décor has, in many senses, become more vibrant and African. Emotionally, this aesthetic appeals to a broader community, inviting widespread identification with the city. The inner city spaces are unique for they balance order with disorder, initiating a wholly original, African cultural landscape. The new imaging is therefore attempting to shape a cultural landscape which is profoundly African, urban and Durban. In this manner, "South Africa, as they say, is finally becoming African" (Matshikiza, 2004:187).

An exhibition detailing iTRUMP's activities expands the link between urban renewal and culture by further illustrating how art and urban initiatives can simultaneously contribute to Durban's cultural landscape. Garth Walker, a graphic designer and Creative Director of Orange Juice Design, and his team were responsible for designing, compiling and curating the *iTRUMP City Guide Exhibition*. Mainly photographic, the exhibition depicts the current status of the city in terms of deployment of capital (rates) and renewal efforts (Walker Interview, 2003). It also aims to show Durbanites that "some lekker things are happening" (Walker Interview, 2003). The exhibition encodes the prosaic or ordinary field of urban regeneration as an artistic and cultural event. In this way, it elevates the urban from a utilitarian sphere into something which is invested with more meaning. Together, the exhibition and the physical regeneration efforts seek to re-image public space in a way that speaks to broader notions of identity and citizenship. As iTRUMP (2003:11) admits, "It is through the creative reinvention of public space that the new image of the inner city begins to form". However, iTRUMP (2003:11) is cognisant of the fact that "the realisation of iTRUMP's goals for the inner city of Durban relies heavily on buy-in from all the Unicity residents and users. With many obstacles behind us, let's discover a new sense of citizenship, and build an inner city that we can all be proud of". Thus, the exhibition and iTRUMP attempt

on both pragmatic and abstract levels to encode new sets of identifications with Durban's space. It is both creating and shaping space on the street level as well as in Durban's abstract cultural imaginings of itself. Art and culture, in Durban, has the ability to rework and reformulate conceptions of space on abstract and practical levels and by association alter the sense of city-place. Cultural regeneration and activities can thus work in tandem with economic imperatives to reveal the African, urban landscape as it simultaneously constructs it. The iTRUMP exhibition therefore displays the openness of Durban's urbanity to alternative cultural inscription. Moreover, it highlights that Durban's Africinity and urbanity cannot adequately be captured in the ruralised representations or design ethics of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign or uShaka Marine World.

Designs on Durban

One method of challenging dominant public-private sector marketing imagery and linking organic, urban cultural forms with corporate culture is through the development of a strongly Africanised, vernacular graphic design ethic. The Durban based experimental graphic design publication, *i-Jusi*,³ aims to do precisely this and contribute to a fuller understanding of Durban and South African urban life. *i-Jusi* was conceived in 1995 by Garth Walker. At that stage, having no clients or work, Walker attempted to find something to occupy his time and keep himself amused. Walker (2003) documents his personal design journey towards the publication of *i-Jusi* in a graphic presentation entitled "one man's search for a boerewors roll". The presentation seeks to illustrate "a suburban white boy's personal journey of 'what makes me african'" (Walker, 2003:2). Somewhat disillusioned with South African Eurocentric corporate graphic design, he began to explore different design aesthetics. Walker had always been interested in culture from a design perspective and started collecting nineteenth century black African photographs. In 1993, Walker used these in a project for an urban clothing company who wanted to position themselves as African. At the time, this was a radical concept. Walker consequently began collecting African craft (earplugs, aprons and walking sticks). Immediately post 1994 elections, the urban, in Walker's opinion, exploded. Walker wished to look at this transition from a design standpoint. He also decided to physically immerse himself in the cultures of the street and began

³ Rough isiZulu translation for 'juice'. Semantically, using 'i-Jusi' is different from using 'uShaka' as there are no contingent associations which rest on mythic conceptions and human subjugations in the name of commercial gain

photographing city welcome signs, burglar bars and fences, armed response signs, 'Beware of the dog' signs, school signs, blocks of flats' names, colourfully painted busses, barber salon signs, butcheries, street type and signage, gravestones, packaging (bubblegum wrappers, maize and samp packaging). The first issue of *i-Jusi* was raw and accidental. A large Durban print company – who wanted to promote themselves to designers – sponsored the print run and Walker sent a copy to every international design magazine for which he could find an address. Coming out of a newly democratic milieu, the publication was seen as vibrant, new and newsy and viral marketing soon ensured that the publication was well-known and respected amongst designers (Walker Interview, 2003).

Importantly, *i-Jusi* is a non-commercial venture and no money is ever exchanged. All suppliers and contributors donate their services free and Walker's current design company, Orange Juice Design, bankrolls the postage. Each issue is themed. There is no specific publication or distribution schedule and on each print run approximately 300 issues are circulated – mostly internationally. Demand for the publication is tremendous. Walker asserts that if he had a print run of 10 000, he could easily move each and every copy. Its limited print run actually works for the publication as it is not easily obtainable which automatically increases its value. Walker is hesitant to formalise the operation and charge for issues. Once a fee is charged, the dynamic changes and the publication becomes a business. Paper and printing would have to be paid for, the publication would have to run to a schedule, distribution would have to be more stringent and possibly the content would be affected. While it is the intention to do this at some future point, for the moment *i-Jusi* remains a fun project for Walker and his creative team (Walker Interview, 2003).

Originally focussed on Durban but now considering other South African cities as well, *i-Jusi* creatively presents a perspective on city life not normally profiled. Primarily a graphic design journal, although words are increasingly included, *i-Jusi* attempts to move "towards a new visual language [and] a new look at african (sic) style" (*i-Jusi*, n.d.; 2002a:1). This new visual language "mixes icons from the past with present symbols and styles" (Gunning, 1997:3). In addition, the intent which the *i-Jusi* team would ascribe to this new visual language is that it "starts on the street and ends up in glossy magazines on coffee tables" (Gunning, 1997:3). The aim of the publication is to change the way words, design and advertising are created and received in South Africa. Walker (Interview, 2003) believes that *i-Jusi* has been successful in this regard, the

caveat being that it is successful in terms of the people already 'converted'. He does not feel that it has significantly changed the South African design and creative industry who garner their design impulses from London, Paris or New York rather than Africa. Certainly, at the moment, no national visual language identity exists (Walker Interview, 2003).

There is no doubt that Africa informs *i-Jusi*'s spirit. Features in the past have dealt with "traditional zulu (sic) culture meets the new urban alternative music scene" (*i-Jusi*, 2002a:1), interpretations of 'life stories' told in graphic visual essays (*i-Jusi*, 1997b), designers interpreting their sentiments and feelings as citizens of the new South Africa (*i-Jusi*, 1997a), introducing an African flavour to well-known South African brands (*i-Jusi*, 1998), looking at the urban, African streetstyle incorporating both street and township traders (*i-Jusi*, 1999), African-inspired typeface issues (*i-Jusi*, 2003, 2000) and a guide to inner city life (*i-Jusi*,

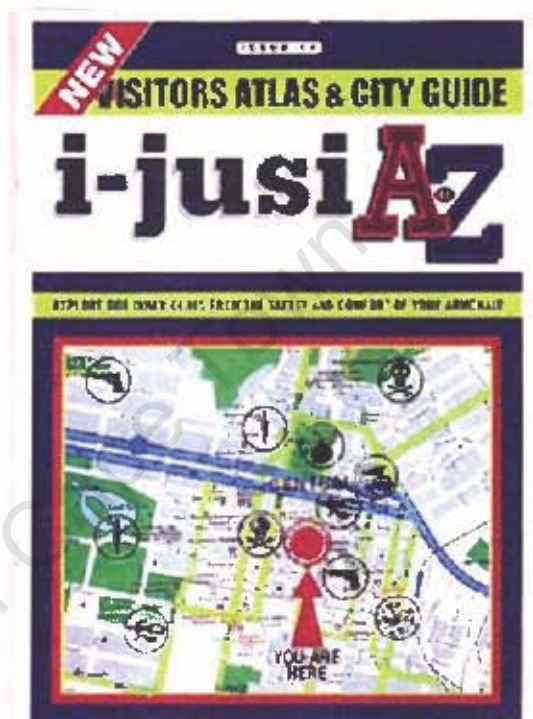


Figure 7.3: Cover of *i-Jusi* City Guide Edition (Walker, 2003)

2001) amongst a host of other themes. The cover of the inner city edition plays on perceptions of fear suggesting that a variety of evils await visitors to South African cities (see Figure 7.3). There is even a bastardised, tongue-in-cheek invitation to "Join The Universal Church Of The Kingdom Of i-jusi" (*i-Jusi*, 2002b). Certainly wherever possible *i-Jusi* attempts to provoke a reaction and to dispel traditional stereotypes and ways of looking at the world. This, often in the context of Durban.

Sudheim (1999:10) asserts: "Advertising, that unruly marriage between money and art, is by turns a breeding ground of fresh new ideas and a bastion of conservative ideology". In this sense, Sudheim (1999) positions the graphic design, art or advertising of *i-Jusi* against approaches which rely on conservative ideological foundations. There is the subtle suggestion that the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign is actually targeted as an example of the latter category as once again the bastardised

slogan "Join The Universal Church Of The Kingdom Of i-jusi" (Sudheim, 1999:10) appears on the same page as Sudheim's text. Sudheim (1999:10) argues that at "its cutting edge...[advertising] has the potential to be a powerful engine of social and aesthetic innovation". As a result, design and advertising can "shift the embedded paradigm" (Sudheim, 1999:10).

Furthermore, Sudheim (1999:10) contends that the principles of semiology teach:

that society sees predominantly what it is taught to by means of visual language controlled by those who own the means of production. In South Africa, this meant the denial of inherent African symbolism and design in favour of ways of seeing imported wholesale from Europe and America.

Sudheim (1999) is extremely critical of ways of seeing and representing that are conditioned by paradigms such as colonialism at the expense of interrogating and investigating local affiliations and connections. Indeed, so intrinsically "locked-up in a bourgeois continental value-system was white South Africa that it was too afraid to take the plunge into the wild and vivid imagery of the continent and the country it had adopted" (Sudheim, 1999:10). Marketing campaigns such as the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' and material manifestations like uShaka Marine World fall precisely into this trap. Relying on established ideologies and ideas, they have, to date, not fully confronted the challenges of engaging in their particular local context.

i-Jusi is one site which breaks away from conventional stereotypes in an attempt to uncover "the unique visual identity of South Africa" (Sudheim, 1999:10). The publication seeks to "challenge corporate South Africa's mimetic Euro-American paradigm and propagate the use of Afrocentric design in local advertising" (Sudheim, 1999:10). "Frustrated by the predominance of values which did not reflect the reality of our subtropical society," such as the values promoted by the KZNTA and the uShaka Marine World developers, *i-Jusi* undertakes "to bring the semiotics of the street into the ivory tower of big-budget advertising and design" (Sudheim, 1999:10). Importantly, these ideas and designs have been recognised as having much commercial value underscoring the point that not only traditionalised stereotypes have the potential to make money. *i-Jusi* is a publication

within whose pages the energy and colour of South Africa streetstyle bounces and shimmers. Inspired by spaza shops wallpapered with Liqui-Fruit cartons, roadside haircut salons and the simplicity of the design of working-class

consumables such as pilchard and shoe-polish tins, tobacco pouches, matchboxes and washing-powder containers, *i-Jusi* is a lemon-sharp breath of the splendid palette of images that glow and abound in everyday local life (Sudheim, 1999:10).

The KZNTA and the uShaka Marine World designers could learn much from this publication in terms of approximating successful and profitable images and designs into their strategies.

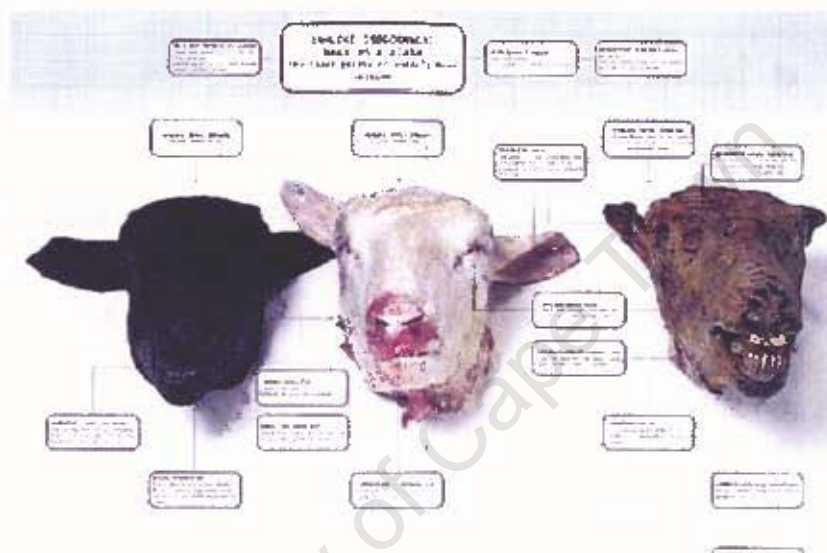


Figure 7.4: Finer Points of Sheep Cuisine (Walker, 2003)

Importantly, *i-Jusi* always urges the re-imagining of South African cities away from traditional tourist and marketing perspectives. Rather than marketing South African cities based on ruralised codes of understandings, *i-Jusi* promotes a particularly urban perspective. For example, one design spread focuses frankly on "the finer points of sheep's head cuisine" (Pauling et al., 2001:6-7; see Figure 7.4) – a common food on offer in Warwick Junction. Another design takes a "scratch and sniff approach" (Vosloo, 2001:11) to death, road kill, food and traditional medicines, incorporating goods that one would find for sale in Warwick Junction (such as those depicted in Figure 7.5). These include animal body parts such as animal shanks, carcasses, skins, baboon hands, bones, skeletons; dead buck, sheep, cattle and dogs; as well as pots of cooked food. This perspective works in complete opposition to the tried and trusted tropes of paradise, adventure and indigenous culture and presents an urban African alternative. As Gabriel (2001:1) comments:



Figure 7.5: For Sale (Walker, 2003)

Forget the elegant giraffe loping across the seemingly endless African plains. You won't find the obligatory loving shot of a pride of lions relaxing in the shade of a Baobab tree, after yet another breath-taking hunt. No pristine, white sand beaches. No Big Five. And absolutely no smiling indigenous people in traditional dress, thrilling a group of enthusiastic tourists with a heart stopping, blood-pounding African dance around the campfire.

Forget everything that you think you know about Africa. This is not your average tour guide to the sights and sounds that the tourism board thinks you'd like to experience. This is Africa through the senses of those who live it, breath it, feel it, think it. Some of our most talented young creatives will guide you through the real stories of Africa. The everyday triumphs and victories. The always devastating failure and loss. And the slow, gradual recovery.

You don't always have to be impressed by what you see. You don't even have to like it all of the time. But then, isn't that what it's all about? To truly love something is to know all its conflicting faces, and to appreciate them for what they are. We know these faces. We pass them everyday in the street. They attack our senses and scream into our passive masks even when we try to ignore them. So we won't ignore them anymore. We can't. This is the spirit of Africa today. Welcome to the i-Jusi A to Z, a complete street guide to South Africa.

Walker (Interview, 2003) firmly believes that graphic design has the potential to substantially and practically challenge stereotypical versions of African city identity. He observes that a definite 'by-product' of *i-Jusi* is their presentation of the inner city in a new manner. Coupled to this is an educational component which encourages

the destabilisation of stereotypes. Thus, *i-Jusi* uses Nyanga muthi-sellers and mobile hair salons to try and present the city in an interesting and stimulating way so that one learns something about what goes on in the inner city that perhaps one did not know before. Hopefully, the result of this process is that stereotypes are altered. However, Walker (Interview, 2003) admits that many of the images *i-Jusi* uses are stereotypical, i.e. muthi-sellers are in themselves a stereotypical inner city image. In order to overcome this, Walker (Interview, 2003) suggests that *i-Jusi* would make use of the image, as they feel it is an interesting image, but they include an added component. For example for one feature, a white reporter was sent to have his fortune told by a sangoma and he wrote up the story in isiZulu. In this manner, *i-Jusi* demonstrates that different versions of city life are integral parts of a whole city culture (Walker Interview, 2003).

i-Jusi does not consciously attempt to reflect Durban. As Walker (Interview, 2003) observes, some material is sourced from other South African cities. However, Durban, he argues, does have the best African, urban examples. According to Walker (Interview, 2003), Durban is best at containing the spirit of a cosmopolitan African city. It has a far greater creative spirit due to its long history of multiculturalism. Other South African cities do not have the same population mix. Durban has the best salon signs, street type and signage (Walker Interview, 2003). Notwithstanding this, Walker (Interview, 2003) suggests that *i-Jusi* is not particularly relevant in the South African context in challenging stereotypical versions of Africanity as the publication is not in the public domain. With so few copies obtainable locally, the debate is just not invigorated. The reaction of the global media audience suggests that *i-Jusi* is reflective of an African design aesthetic. As such, the global audience responds positively to this aesthetic because they are looking at it from an apolitical, visual language point of view. Its perceived way-out-left-field stance strikes a potent cord with design cultures elsewhere. In South Africa, the reaction is far more tepid. Firstly, very few South Africans actually get to see the publication. Secondly, as mentioned above, South African design has not embraced Africa (Walker Interview, 2003). Yet, even if *i-Jusi* is not widespread in terms of circulation, the publication does contribute to the transformation of representational and material Durban in its offering of alternative representation codes and its rewriting of the visual language of the city in terms of an African urbanity.

A Point for Reflection

Before continuing to discuss more visceral and physical cultural encounters with Durban's urbanity and identity in the following chapter, it is apposite to momentarily pause and reflect on the preceding discussion. The chapter has illustrated the manner in which Durban is culturally inscribed through iTRUMP's urban renewal efforts and the *i-Jusi* design publication. Both strategies serve to culturally structure the space of Durban giving it a meaning and identity located within urban Africanity. City-life and form is written and expressed in a manner which both suggests and impels 'readers' to engage with a city that exists beyond the expectations created in the face of fear (of the city) and mainstream cultural marketing such as that promoted by the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and uShaka Marine World. Moreover, the above examples provide a discursive alternative to the local government's competitive script and a new opportunity for stimulating more organic and meaningful attempts at culture-led regeneration.

8

Performing African Urbanity

Introduction

This chapter continues the argument presented in the previous chapter that urban cultural strategies have the potential to reconfigure Durban's urbanity and identity. Having considered the manner in which African space and identity is contoured, through urban planning and graphic design; here, emphasis is placed on visceral, physical encounters with Durban. Through site-specific dance, music and performance art, various cultural practitioners are engaging with the imagined and material landscape of Durban. The chapter begins by examining contemporary site-specific dance in Durban, highlighting its potential to transform Durban's material and representational space. The narrative points out that cultural identification with urban space can organically emerge from collaborative performance sites. In a similar fashion to dance, music plays an important role in shaping Durban's space; various examples (including an experimental album, an operatic musical theatre piece and an annual music festival) are drawn upon in order to support this contention. The chapter then considers a performance art event which aims at transforming urban space after nightfall. All the efforts discussed create new points of creolisation in Durban. Moreover, they point to the existence of an alternative, creolised Durban identity based on urban conceptions of African identity. City life and form are therefore inscribed in a manner which challenges the colonial representational tropes evident elsewhere in Durban.

Dancing Space

Dance, specifically site-specific dance, has appropriated the task of transforming Durban's representational space. The present narrative seeks to add to the body of literature which considers culture at the city scale and the possibilities of culture's ability to transform space. Site-specific performance can be defined as "performance created in response to and performed within a specific site or location" (Hunter, 2005:367). In such performance, both the site and performers alter one another (Jestrovic, 2005). Site-specific performance or performance art is neither revolutionary nor unique as Jay Pather (2005b), Artistic Director of Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre,

observes. Indeed, much has been written on street performance and site-specific art (Hunter, 2005; Jakovljevic, 2005; Jestrovic, 2005; Turner, 2005; Holcombe, 2004; Kwon, 2002; Kaye, 2000, 1996; Cohen-Cruz, 1998a; Mason, 1992). Research in the South African context on the subject is provisional and/ or descriptive (Davidoff, 2005; Banning, 2002; Cohen-Cruz, 1998b; Riccio, 1996). Durban's revolutionary dance scene is certainly the most active genre within the performance art scene (Caffyn-Parsons, 2004). A sense of originality, energy and enthusiasm...currently imbues the Durban dance scene" (Rorvik, cited in Centre for Creative Arts, 2003:1). Dance has been the source of profitable imaginings of Durban identity. A Durban dance language, referential to space and locality, is ushering in new ways of thinking about identity and space. Furthermore, dance is currently shaping the cultural landscape of Durban in forceful ways.

Durban's major dance companies – Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre, The Fantastic Flying Fish Company, The Flatfoot Dance Company and the Phenduka Dance Theatre – have played an influential role in this regard. David Gouldie (Interview, 2004), Resident Choreographer for the Fantastic Flying Fish Company, observes that as a dancer, space and environment are crucial elements affecting one's craft. Certainly his company's "principal purpose is creating work that is identifiable with and indigenous of Durban, KwaZulu-Natal and Africa" (Centre for Creative Arts, 2003:15). The identity politics of space are consequently a common theme amongst Durban's dance community. Lliane Loots (Interview, 2003), Artistic Director of the Flatfoot Dance Company, contends that contemporary dance is able to "create something which speaks about [the] clash of identity in our own space".

Importantly, contemporary dance can transcend language and speak in a way that language cannot (Loots Interview, 2003; Pather Interview, 2003). Dance is an extremely

interesting cultural and artistic medium because it is the medium which speaks with the body and because the body can speak tradition and culture, but it also can speak a clash of traditions and culture, it becomes a very profound way to make statements and comments (Loots Interview 2003).

Consequently, as Pather (2004:5) suggests, "the moving, mutable and richly elastic body [has been] identified and seized upon as an ideal site for a massive range of languages, symbols and cultural iconography reflective of a society in rapid and sometimes turbulent flux". In site-specific dance performance, "the body gives form to ideas and response to the site as experienced by the choreographers and performers (and...by the audience)"

(Hunter, 2005:368). Dance pits body against body and mimics the directness with which people have to relate to one another on the street (Pather Interview, 2003). Pather (Interview, 2003) observes that every person is perpetually located within a mystery of one's symbols. Dance cuts through all of that. It exposes the dislocation or uncanny nature of life and is underpinned by themes of

belonging and not belonging. The idea that this is my home but it's also not my home and that's a class thing, it's a race thing, it's a gender thing, it's about skin, and that's...because dance is visceral and how do we feel if we belong? Do we belong in our skin? You know, what are we? You know all of those questions (Loots Interview, 2003).

Dance can therefore subvert traditional assumptions about belonging, dislocation, place, space and identity and illuminate aspects that are crucial to the postcolonial quest – indeed, many of these points have been raised in the theoretical concerns of Chapter 2. In the South African context, dance can thus reveal the postcolonial condition. Examining Durban's site-specific dance performance through postcolonial perspectives thus enables an understanding of culture, regeneration and identity.

Pather's Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre in particular creates site-specific dance that engages in the spatio-cultural landscape of Durban and seeks to have an impact on urban space. After all, Siwela Sonke, translated from isiZulu, "means crossing over to a new place altogether" (Pather, 2002b). Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre "brings together disparate strands in forms of dance, music and theme revealing in its various juxtapositions a commonality that runs through all our diversities" (Pather, 2002b). Pather (Interview, 2003) believes that self-contained dance is not stimulating. Dance should be attached to a range of projects. In this regard, Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre is keenly interested in urban renewal and development. The company draws inspiration from the street and seeks to feed off its pulse (Pather Interview, 2003). As such, the "company has shown faith in the city council's...[iTRUMP Programme] which seeks to find solutions to the inner city's demise, by taking up residence in an old, unused ballroom dancing studio [in the city centre] and converting it into its headquarters" (Ballantyne, 2004:8). Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre both contributes practically and culturally to urban regeneration projects.

Public performance is a "key site of identity construction" (Wilson, 2000:239). Indeed, through site-specific dance, Pather reinvigorates a relationship

between the urban and identity. Pather's work actively is shaped by and shapes space. As he observes:

My own interest in site specific performance stemmed from my interest in the moving body in space...My dances derive from the simple notion that Spaces shape the movement and gestural languages of people, who in turn shape those spaces, how they are used or even whether they are used at all. We sometimes go into a building or not, chose one street over another, follow one route or make a detour...this unspoken relationship between the moving body and architecture interests me about public spaces and informs both the content and the context of my dance works (Pather, 2005b:2-3).

Through exploring this co-constituting relationship between space and identity, Pather (Interview 2003) hopes to develop the artistic and cultural life of Durban. Pather (2004:5) feels that city spaces resemble "elaborate, ready-made sets for choreographers fleeing the confines of the theatre". Walking in Durban and participating in its city-life on a daily basis, he believes that the physical city constitutes a large set for social interaction and cross-cultural dialogue. He suggests that there is a need in South Africa for dance which is relevant to ordinary people. The city, in this case Durban, provides Pather with a template from which to ground this relevance. There is a need to interrogate the planning of Durban and the way that it has unfolded. Cities exhibit flows of energy and people. A broad spectrum of life is experienced on the street where the city condenses and forces human interactions. Pather (Interview, 2003) is entranced by the idea of living, working and playing in the inner city. It is a space of multiple points of inspiration. In this manner, the central city becomes both a raw canvass to access more relevant choreographies and a site in which to promote and inject, as it were, more life.

Through the site-specific *Cityscapes* and *Nightscapes* performances, Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre engages with the built fabric of Durban. *Cityscapes* identifies five very different spaces within the city: Legends in Musgrave Centre¹, The Albany Hotel², 320 West Street³, the North Beach Pier⁴ and The Workshop Out of Africa Coffee Shop⁵. *Nightscapes'* after-dark performances utilise the same 320 West Street space in addition to the Gateway Theatre of Shopping and the Newscafé restaurant in

¹ Former restaurant in Musgrave Centre (an upmarket shopping mall).

² Hotel in Durban's inner city.

³ High rise building in Durban's inner city incorporating both office and retail space.

⁴ One of Durban's most popular beaches.

⁵ The Workshop is a shopping centre on the edge of Durban's inner city.

Musgrave. To Durbanites, these spaces are well known and used. Each location provides the inspiration for a specific dance as well as the set. The North Beach pier dance incorporates Celtic, Shembe and Indian dances. Very much part of the urban environment, the beach, surf and waves inspire ritualised, hypnotic dances which take the form of formation performances. The Workshop dance, situated in a coffee shop, has a jazzy feel and is accompanied on the piano by the regular musician who provides entertainment at that establishment. The West Street dance, situated in the heart of the inner city, uses escalators to present a dance based on businessmen taking themselves seriously. The Newscafé Dance utilises elements of jazz, funk and performance art. The Gateway dance incorporates a range of dance styles (Traditional African, Contemporary, Spanish, Italian, Indian and Classical) set to Ravel's *Bolero*. In the Musgrave dance, situated in the heart of conspicuous consumer land, a woman in voluminous skirts abseils down a shopping centre wall while a group of male *isicathimiya*⁶ singers sing the praises of Armani and Calvin Klein below on the pavement.⁷ The Albany Hotel dance attempts to reveal qualities of Durban's quainter and smaller spaces.

Combined with video footage taken during each of the original site-specific performances, *Cityscapes* was performed once again in the Durban Art Gallery⁸ in the colonially built Durban City Hall – a major icon of Durban (an entrance fee was charged at this performance). The various *Cityscapes* performances occurred simultaneously in different gallery spaces; therefore, audience members were able to pick their personal route through a representational Durban. Indeed the audience was encouraged to: "Choose your own path, stop for a drink...watch the video, stop by for a performance, move on – the city is yours – go as you please" (Pather, 2002b).

In mimicking the external streetscape, *Cityscapes* invites the audience to participate in a rewriting of Durban. The audience member is placed in a position of agency, stimulating the belief that one's involvement can affect or alter the performance and consequently the representational experience. *Cityscapes* writes over the architecture and cultural activities one might expect in a formerly European-modelled art

⁶ Choral singing with a rhythmic dance component and strong social commentary; originally developed by mineworkers.

⁷ The concept of performers walking down external walls is not unique (see Holcombe, 2004; Kaye, 2000).

⁸ The Durban Art Gallery has consciously attempted to Africanise its image and art. In 1996, the Gallery re-hung its permanent collection. Previously, it consisted of roughly 20% local art and 80% foreign art. At present, the reverse proportion is true (Brown Interview, 2003). In reflecting a more local aesthetic, the Gallery shapes Durban's identity as a place with a vernacular Africanised sensibility.

institution. The various performances (in both their creolised choreography and physical activity) transgress the supposed sanctity of the gallery space. In addition, the audiences' wanderings through representational Durban appropriate the built fabric and invest an urban icon of colonialism with new meaning and in so doing, also subvert its cultural hegemony. In this very site and symbol of colonial, iconic architecture and culture, *Cityscapes* mediates a conversation between the pre-colonial past and postcolonial present; its contemporary infringements inferring that the City Hall has unceasingly been the site of similar border crossings. *Cityscapes* implies that Durban has always belonged to all its residents. In stressing that 'the city is yours,' *Cityscapes* speaks to a broader, unqualified notion of citizenship.

At the symbolic heart of colonialism, *Cityscapes* opens up urban space to all who negotiate, walk and experience it. Iconic architecture is an attempt to assert cultural power but *Cityscapes* destabilises this power, suggesting that an organic, street-scale, inclusive cultural history and present speaks far more meaningfully to Durban's urban African context. Such imaginings in turn begin to destabilise physical space. *Cityscapes* suggests that Durban's space is constituted in tandem with its urban African identity and is actively shaped by those who live and experience its daily life. By making, accessing and rewriting connections between the urban past, present and future, *Cityscapes* works to transform Durban's representational and material space.

Interestingly, Pather (2005b) observes that he chooses sites for his performances which have iconic elements to them. Yet his understanding of the iconic is very different to that of practitioners in the North. For example, in NewcastleGateshead, culture-led regeneration and identity revitalisation is stimulated by the construction of iconic buildings (see Miles, 2005). In Durban, the iconic is revealed in the *existing* built environment which embodies "the genus loci or spirit of the place rather than...the brilliant architecture" (Pather, 2005b:2). The iconic in Durban "has to do with the underlying *raison d'être* (sic) of the spaces themselves that is sometimes aesthetically loaded at others [and] proffer other possibilities, not least of which is to comment on the space itself" (Pather, 2005b:2). While Miles (2005b) and Bailey, Miles and Stark's (2004) research seeks to understand the manner in which iconic developments have the potential to revitalise pre-existing identities, it appears that smaller scale, site-specific performance in the postcolonial built environment can achieve similar results albeit through more modest interventions. Pather (2005b) firmly believes that through site-specific performance functional and material space can be transformed into a site of

dreams. His sentiments echo Robinson's theoretical assumption that imagining new kinds of space can shift space as in a dream. In the cultural landscaping of Durban, this point has particular relevance as it underscores the imagined, representational geography of Durban and the potential of culture to contour its urbanity. This is a crucial observation for it suggests that cultural regeneration and transformations of urban space can emerge from organic performance-based activities rather than from large-scale infrastructural development. It is the strength of postcolonialism and its ability to reveal unpretentious cultural formats that makes it entirely useful for understanding the urban geography of cities.

Such cultural efforts reach past the representations of rural Africanity prevalent in marketing discourses and the built environment. Accordingly, *Cityscapes* and *Nightscapes* attempt to answer the question: "What does Durban offer beyond the bounteous surf, the beaches, Zulu dancing, the racecourse, bunny chow and Durban poison? [marijuana]" (Pather, 2002b:1). Pather (2002b:1) believes that Durban is "filled with contradictions, ambiguities and oddities". Its public spaces are "rich with aesthetics or non-aesthetics" (Pather, cited in Krouse, 2003:2). The spaces of South African cities in general are peopled with "ancient customs, framed in contemporary neon, a range of languages pure and bastardized, sounds and smells that are inviting or noise depending on who you are all offer a vast palette of intermingling aesthetics and sensibilities" (Pather, 2005b:3). It is this palette of experience that Pather incorporates, reflects upon and represents in his performance pieces. Actively invoking Durban's African, urban nature, his choreography simultaneously constructs these realities. Pather is also cognisant of a latent sense of Durban's history which masquerades beneath the surface of the postmodern, 'contemporary neon' milieu.

Pather proposes that Durban constitutes South Africa's cultural core (Reddy, 2006). Its cultural imbrication has stamped its character on the built and imagined landscape. Durban, for Pather (2002b:1) "stands out for its heady mixture of the clean lines with the gauche, a testament to influence upon influence by various cultures. It would seem that the city absorbed everything and spat out nothing". People leave their indelible imprints on public space (Pather Interview, 2003). Pather seeks to reconnect to these imprints as well as speak to present negotiations of space. It is not enough to link back to the past; one must use it to change the future. Indeed, urban spaces are "rich with the possibilities of even new mixes in the imprints that are left in

the architecture as well as on the faces of the people that inhabit this architecture”

(Pather, 2005b:3). Pather (2002b:1) observes that his

sense of Durban’s public spaces is that things happen with an unpredictable mystery: a women in traditional Muslim dress jogging down the beachfront, an unlikely couple checking into the Albany Hotel, a skyline that puts in one small frame a tower of a church, a turret of a mosque and the spirally apex of a modernist building. All contained in one space.

Durban, after all, “was not the ideal Apartheid City so cultures and types rub up against each other with fervour and speed” (Pather, 2005b:3). Such an understanding supports the creolisation literature which insists that South African cities have always been sites of border crossings.

Durban's public spaces therefore negotiate a particular dialogue and interaction that is both powerful and rich. The “dancers work within the context of the architecture and develop dance theatre works that are contained by the space yet also comment and reference their contexts” (Pather, 2002b:1). Pather (2005b:3) continues and mirrors this dialogue by drawing on a range of dance styles including “classical African dance such as the mngoma and the indlamu, Shembe and sangoma dance, classical Indian dance, ballet to pantsula, kwasa kwasa, hip hop, isicathimiya, contemporary and physical theatre”. Pather’s (2002b:1) site-specific performances display “the vast range of human and physical architecture that is present in Durban and the wealth that emerges in the inter-action amongst all these elements on our streets”. To him, “This rich and layered interaction...is what ‘culture’ is all about” (Pather, 2002b:1). Accordingly, he describes his choreographic and performance style as “intercultural” (Pather, 2005b:3). It can be argued however in support of the theoretical development thus far, that his performances (which demand more than a mere inter-action of cultures and space) are perhaps more suitably designated as creolised.

For example, the *Nightsapes* Gateway performance translates the process of the coming together of divergent cultural dance styles to form a new dance language and identity. This is “the kind of dance where you start to appropriate traditions and cultures and start to shift them around” (Loots Interview, 2003). Such dance also invests the commodified space of the mall with a more profound signification suggesting that these monuments to capitalism can host activities other than those which coincide with a hegemonic, stereotypical script. The Gateway performance amalgamates fifty dancers from different companies in an effort to create something new. Successively, to

the background music of Ravel's *Bolero*, traditional African, Indian, Irish, Spanish, Contemporary and Classical dancers meld in and out of each other. Watching, one is struck by the sense that there is something unexpected about each of the dancers and their movements. While seemingly performing traditional steps, the musical overtones necessarily alter the choreography. Moreover, there are little hints that each dancer is in fact working against, rather than perpetuating, stereotypes about that form of dance. For example, some of the traditional warrior dancers are bare-breasted woman, a departure from the norm. The dancers melt together until, as the music reaches its crescendo, they are dancing as one. The piece ends with the elevation of two children, white and black African, in the centre of all the dancers. The metaphorical base of this piece is obvious. The incorporation of different aspects of inter-cultural identity culminates in a positive, creolised, integrated future, which artistically suggests possibilities and opportunities for identity within Durban. The performance destabilizes stereotypes as well as suggests the possibility of creolized futures. With their emphasis on past, shared histories and their focus on future shared realities, the notion of creolisation sheds greater theoretical light on Pather's site-specific performances and their affects on identity and space. Through a multitude of languages and symbols, plural histories are given new life (Triulzi, 1996). As Pather (2005b:5) observes:

These public spats of concrete and humanity whether forced and resigned or willing and hopeful, continue to shape some of our basic instincts...My interventions through performance then are meant to be part of the discourse of these spaces, their diversity and power, to elaborate on an existing history or to make apparent hidden textures of these lived spaces, memory and identity are resurrected".

Hunter (2005:370) suggests that the "lived space of place then becomes informed by the individuals' awareness and presence in the space in the here and now combined and negotiated with an awareness of the past". Performance thus creates and renegotiates links to past and present sites and identities (Jestrovic, 2005).

Cityscapes and *Nightscapes* constitute provocative attempts at fashioning some notion of Durban's space and identity. Both productions comment on "power relations in an African city" (Krouse, 2003:1) by disturbing the privileging of the colonial over the postcolonial; commodified globalised culture above organic African culture; and trite multiculturalism over creolisation. Pather's performances do not seek to provide the final comment about Durban spaces or their identities but rather innovatively unite

audience, dance, video and urbanity. The performances are not static or authoritative. They invite and encourage ongoing personal performance and participation in Durban's spaces so that individual connections to those spaces can be developed or invoked. Durban's identity in this discursive sphere is more flexible and open to negotiation. Boundaries between the audience and the performance necessarily blur. The "responses of this passing-by, informal, unstructured audience are in turn documented by artists who interpret on video what happens at these site specific performance" (Pather, 2002b:1). Thus, rather than being a passive observer, the audience becomes part of the actual performance.

As such, Pather (Interview, 2003) intimates that a major aim of *Cityscapes* and *Nightscapes* rests in activating people's connection with art. The 'audience' is empowered with freedom of choice. Freedom to participate or to leave. These options mimic daily urban and streetwise choices. On an experiential level, walking the streets involves similar decisions as to whether to become involved or disengaged in the activity on the street. Walking the city streets also highlights the fact that there is no single, homogenous identity; one encounters a range of people (Pather Interview, 2003). Thus, the point for Pather (cited in Krouse, 2003:2) centres around "finding the complexities of my everyday life inside the work". Indeed as Bain (2003:161) suggests,

The real challenge for South African 'theatre' practitioners lies in the rediscovery of a tradition in which 'performance' is a part of everyday life, and not merely a part of marginal or fringe culture...It is this fine line between commercial and critical cultural principals that must be negotiated if our children are to be exposed to *our* stories in the performance platforms of the future

Accordingly, it "has been a way of making art that embraces the complexity of living in a South African city" (Pather, cited in Krouse, 2003:2).

This understanding supports the literature which suggests that "successful examples of culture-led regeneration do in fact engage with a pre-existing collective sense of local identity" (Bailey, Miles & Stark, 2004:48). Furthermore, Pather's site-specific work supports the notion that "successful urban regeneration is not about a trickle-down effect at all, but in fact almost the reverse: it is about revitalising cultural identities in a way which represents a counter-balance to broader processes of cultural globalisation" (Bailey, Miles & Stark, 2004:49). Through culture-led strategies, local citizens "can re-establish ownership of their own sense of place and space and, perhaps

more importantly, of their own sense of history" (Bailey, Miles & Stark, 2004:49). New spaces "represent the manifestation of cultural change that recognises the significance of cultural history" (Bailey, Miles & Stark, 2004:64). Site-specific performance can re-invoke and revisit Durban's earlier forms of creolisation and lead to the transformation of Durban's representational and physical space. After all, culture-led regeneration is most successful when it is tied to underlying cultural identities rather than to ersatz cultural identities like those manifest in uShaka Marine World. It is under these terms that residents become enthusiastic about culture. Yet as Miles (2005b:913) warns, the success of culture-led regeneration depends "upon people's sense of belonging in a place and the degree to which culture-led regeneration can engage with that sense of belonging". He argues that culture-led developments are successful where "the reinvention of the urban landscape fits in with, rather than being foisted upon, the identity of the place concerned" (Miles, 2005b:915). It is here where Pather is particularly sensitive to Durban's underpinning identity. It is important to remember that the process of restoring and recouping "significant shared meanings for many neglected urban spaces involves claiming the entire cultural landscape as an important part of history, not just its architectural monuments" (Hayden et al., cited in Miles, 2005b:923). Pather is thus careful to draw on all possible sources for inspiration and looks, as has already been stressed, for the iconic in everyday life. Miles (2005b) suggests that space and cultural history form a symbiotic, if unexplored, relationship. However, this narrative illustrates that in the African, urban context such an assertion is untrue. Pather, for one, is delving deeply into this relationship.

Dancing in sites around Durban fashions the city's Africanity and urbanity in that it highlights a unique and perceptive unveiling of percipient culture in Durban. Moreover, dance initiatives such as Pather's do more than simply counter stereotypical versions of identity. As Sharp, Pollock and Paddison (2005:1010) observe in another context, such efforts involves "a more perceptive communication of numerous identities within a community and encourage[s] dialogue both internally and with wider society".⁹ *Cityscapes* and *Nightscapes* also illustrate the breaking down of preconceptions with regards to the availability and accessibility of the inner city. Pather's site-specific performance is significant for it shows that cultural identification with urban space can emerge from organic, fluid and interactive performance sites. The culture-led

⁹ For example, *Cityscapes* was successfully adapted for the Johannesburg context.

regeneration and postcolonial literatures could both pick up on these points in their efforts to engage more successfully with urban and cultural questions.

This is also a vital point for the eThekweni Municipality; for, Pather (2005b:3) correctly argues that there is a vast difference in shaping performances for the purposes of cultural tourism and “doing so for the people who populate these spaces as part of their daily rituals...the dances do not always celebrate our diversity trailing advertising jingles and the good intentions of city fathers and mothers”. Clearly, these works operate in a very different context to that of commodified multiculturalism as manifest in the uShaka Marine World development. These performance pieces “comment, instigate and interrogate. They draw from the controversy of a particular space sometimes with humour and at times with seriousness, that the subject dictated to by the space demands” (Pather, 2005b:3). For Pather (2005b:8), “living in South Africa today requires us to face and build, the cold face of what we as individuals can do in those rich moments of interaction, this opportunity in an emerging democracy to find something new and miraculous, in each other, in those private moments in those public spaces, forever shifting, forever tilting”. Moreover, Pather (cited in Reddy, 2006:10) contends that Durban “moulds you makes you into what I think I am – an African. It is such an African city. It gives every culture a face and is without a doubt the most beautiful African city there is...I think its vital ingredient is its people. It’s a people city. It’s just about people. They make the city what it is”. In Pather’s comments and his work, one is constantly aware of the manner in which Durban landscapes African identities and vice versa.

Sounds Like Here

Jürgen Bräuninger, Lecturer in Composition, Electronic Music, Music, Culture and History at the University of KwaZulu-Natal is a frequent collaborator with Jay Pather. He works with similar material and attempts to achieve congruous effects in music to Pather’s dance efforts. Like site-specific dance, music similarly fashions and produces the city. Music constructs, negotiates and transforms identity, place and our sense of it (Stokes, 1994a, 1994b). In addition, music can play a part in negotiating urban space and identities (Mutonya 2005; Cohen, 1994; Riano-Alcala, 1991). Through music, it is possible to learn how to relate to or engage with urban space. While ostensibly a small and relatively confined effort, Bräuninger’s music can also be analysed for its points of imbrication, creolisation and possibility. Christopher Ballantine

and Gerhard Maré, University of Natal Professors of Music and Sociology respectively, argue that Bräuninger's music attempts to forge beyond tired stereotypes and representations of Durban (Ballantine & Maré Interview, 2003). Postcolonialism can usefully uncover these relationships and expose the manner in which music aids cultural landscaping in Durban. Bräuninger (Interview, 2004a) uses music to culturally delineate the city and dapple in its identity. He does so by attempting to engage with the different musical styles apparent in the city. He feels that Durban contains such a wealth of cultures and ideas that it is a shame not to rework and compose them into new forms. By forcing juxtaposition and integration, a different sound is achieved – a hallmark of creolisation. In dance (because of its visual nature), this process is more easily identifiable. For example, Pather has made use of images of ballerinas wearing gumboots (invoking allusions to both colonial and migrant worker dance), a method which Bräuninger (Interview, 2004a) reiterates musically. By forcing contiguity, something new and different is achieved, creating music which has the potential to reflect and shape Durban's identity and urbanity.

Through musical experimentation one approaches the ephemeral entity which seems to be Durban. Bräuninger (Interview, 2004a) explains: "this way you have something...which is sort of a home space sound and then you expand on it, you play with it and turn it into something slightly different but you still have a sense of, hey this sounds like here". 'Sounding like here' was a crucial aim of Bräuninger's 1998 soundscape project which sought to sound out the space of Durban (Bräuninger Interview, 2004a). Drawing inspiration from global musical projects, including the more scientific Parisian World soundscape project and the music industry's constant desire to sell new music scenes, Bräuninger set out to create a peculiarly Durban album titled *Urban Noise and scraps Works* (Bräuninger, 1998). This album has been said to be representative of the best contemporary music coming out of South Africa (Segerman, 1999). The album plays with and revolves around themes of urban music, accents, ambiances, sounds, hybridisation of culture, ambiguous identities, manipulation of reality, authenticity, 'the other', art, media, memory, pop, commerce, tradition, meaning, craft, history and academia (Bräuninger, 2002). Local and global constituents are considered in the postcolonial space of Durban which is home (iKhaya) to the collaborators (Bräuninger, 2002). Bräuninger, lyricist Ari Sitas and 47 Durban musicians collaborated on the album, borrowing "the daily murmuring and noises of dozens of ordinary Durbanites" (Dixon, 1999:2). The effect is the creation of "a powerful

soundscape encompassing the many moods and sounds of Durban. It dips into the pool of action that makes Durban unique, and comes up with an extraordinary product" (Turner, 1998:3).

^d*Urban Noise and scraps Works* is not merely a documentary recording of Durban's soundspace and soundscape – the 'documentary' sound is somehow changed and mixed together with other things. The aim is "to capture sights and sounds that are unique to Durban. There are levels of reality overlaid with the surreal. Some of the 'real' sounds are artificial. Everything has been played with" (Bräuninger, cited in Turner, 1998:4). Thus, "Alongside interwoven bursts of practically every kind of music presently available to one's ears – free jazz, hip hop, rap, modern classical avant-garde – there are the noises of a city and its inhabitants, whether human or insect, tourist guide or fruit-bat" (de Waal, 1999:1). The album contains a "surprisingly coherent melange of poetry, artsong, children's chants, traditional African instrumentation, jazz trumpet, musique concrete and electronic programming" (Haslop, 1998:4). Dixon (1999:2) argues that the album "combines a fascinating and surreal collage with the sounds of post-apartheid Durban". As a work of art, the pseudo documentary creates a figurative Durban (Bräuninger Interview, 2004a). In this less-than-concrete Durban, the "present meets the past and Africa meets Europe with an exhilarating crash" (de Waal, 1999:1). Through these clashes, "Bräuninger engineers a series of fertile collisions: muzak is added to the buzz of a marketplace; the sound of house alarms mutate into the noise of insects...north Indian bansuri is laid over the rhythm of the toyi-toyi" (de Waal, 1999:1).

The first track of the album, "Shrieks," begins with the sound of waves crashing on the beach. This immediately establishes both tone and setting. Another track, "Violino" seeks to reconcile African and European aesthetics by playing a piece composed for a violin on an umakhweyana¹⁰ (Buthelezi, cited in Bräuninger, 1998). Indeed, the incorporation of traditional instruments (lesiba¹¹, mbira¹², nyanga panpipes¹³, horns, timbila¹⁴, isitholotholo¹⁵, xizambi¹⁶), performance genres (such as izibongo¹⁷,

¹⁰ Early nineteenth century Zulu braced gourd-bow.

¹¹ Breath sounded musical bow instrument.

¹² Probably developed in Zimbabwe; has come to signify both traditional Zimbabwean music and electric pop.

¹³ Panpipes usually made from bamboo.

¹⁴ Resonated xylophones.

¹⁵ isiZulu name for a commercially produced jew's harp.

¹⁶ Shangana, Tsonga, notched, friction mouth bow.

¹⁷ Praise poems – often critical and satirical.

isicathulo¹⁸ and toyi-toying¹⁹) and Indian instruments (bansuri²⁰) with Western musical forms on the album, invokes a rich heritage and contemporary template of musicality in Durban (Bräuninger, 2002). The sound invokes a sense of present and past creolisation – an imbrication which transcends shallow, rainbow nation, multicultural efforts. By not privileging one musical form over another, an intricate sound that is both historical and contemporary is created. Tracks like “Anywhere Far IV”, “Anywhere Far II”, “Anywhere Far III”, and “Anywhere Far I” (Bräuninger, 1998) seek to similarly meld the European and African sound spectra. Sound materials in these pieces include musical instruments (timbila, kudu horns and mbira), an excerpt from a speech and environmental sounds (insects, birds, frogs, surf). Traditional acoustics are manipulated and combined with live and taped electronic instruments. Through tracks such as these, the listener begins to approximate the sounds of space – and the feel of Durban. The listener also begins to appreciate a richer history of Durban and its multiple shared and crossed borders.

The effect of the album is to evoke the essence of Durban through the various tracks. Indeed, this was the experience of Australian reviewer, Norm Dixon (1999). Listening to the music, Dixon (1999:2) was able to conjure up a previous visit to Durban, recounting that the “sights, sounds, smells and excitement came flooding back as I listened to this challenging album”. The association of different musical styles with dogs barking, hadedahs squawking and alarms ringing serve to meld, shape and engage with Durban’s space. In doing so, Durban’s representation becomes more than a ruralised simulacrum but a living breathing city. This supports Robinson’s (1998) notion that there is considerable creative potential for shaping and imagining new kinds of space. Through the album, new senses of Durban’s representational spaces are created.

This is similarly the effect of “Warwick Δ” (Bräuninger, 1998). In this track, a recording of Warwick Junction’s ambience and sound is subjected to an editing process. The track weaves together the sounds of daily trading, sirens, gunshots and traffic, resulting in a feel for the energy and vibrancy of this central node. Gunfire, at the conclusion of the track, reminds one of the reality of crime but also plays with one’s stereotypical notions of the area. The gunshots remind the listener of his/ her preconceived notion that Warwick Junction is a dangerous place. The gunfire is also

¹⁸ Gumboot dancing.

¹⁹ Politically and symbolically reclaiming space through protest.

²⁰ Hindustani term for transverse flutes.

juxtaposed against a muzak background track – vaguely resembling Joseph Shabalala's 'Nonathemba'. The muzak arrangement, which methodically builds up in volume, injects the foregrounded 'noise' of the street with a "cheesy/ christmasy (sic)" feel (Bräuninger Interview, 2004b). The addition of the muzak attributes a musical style traditionally associated with commodified public spaces (e.g. shopping malls, airports and elevators) to a different kind of external public space. In this way, it 'authenticates' Warwick Junction as an important trading space within the city. It underscores the fact that despite Warwick's Junctions' informal nature, it is a space not dissimilar to its more formal counterparts. The muzak subtly re-encodes the space and the harsh, grating, trading and survival sounds to a more familiar level. The track renders the space less alienating and defamiliarises it in a manner which is congruent with urban renewal efforts by iTRUMP. Space that is traditionally viewed as underscoring the realities of a poor African life is injected into a cultural landscape. Thus, African urban life is represented as possessing a lyrical quality which accentuates space in particularly meaningful ways. This allows for the recognition of a cultural imagining that is stimulating and revealing in its efforts to write and be written upon by the city. It also works to transform the urban landscape.

Not all reviewers have met Bräuninger's (1998) album with unqualified enthusiasm. Indeed, Campbell (n.d.:3) suggests that while Bräuninger has some interesting ideas, they are couched in "a mixture of a-tonal, pre-school drama teacher poetry recitals and a sampler gone mad". Nevertheless, as Turner (1998:4) suggests, the album is "a picture book in sound". In essence, it depicts a creolised cityscape. It is for this reason that Pather has made extensive use of *Urban Noise and scraps Works* in his work. The music and dance mirror each other so that Durbanites "in all their cultural glory, emerge out of, or are juxtaposed against, an architectural, urban...landscape" (Sichel, 1998:5). The dancers give visual expression to the music, tapping "out a plethora of rhythms and identities as they do deliciously inventive things, like an isicathamiya pas de deux and the mango tango" (Sichel, 1998:5). In doing so, the collaboration reveals an alternative and transformed urban space.

Similarly another project, *Dead Fish and Dreams of Love Again* (Bräuninger & Sitas, 1995), seeks to provide further complicated and textured comment on Durban and its identity. Collaborating with Ari Sitas, Bräuninger (Interview, 2004a) observes that they sought to look at Durban and its inhabitants in a surrealist manner. Accordingly, their project "is a celebration of our Durban - and thus South African -

diversities and conflicts. It is an attempt to synthesise the sounds of our city, our false naturalisms, our quest for culture and tourism and our enormous class and ethnic conflicts" (Bräuninger & Sitas, 1995:2). The elements and characters of the plot are symbols and metaphors of Durban's cultural reality. Taking the form of an operatic musical theatre piece, nothing is simple and straightforward as one expects from Bräuninger. Musical styles, genres and instruments are interwoven and confused.

Dead Fish and Dreams of Love Again seeks to comment on the ambivalence of Durban space as a:

City of magic
 landscape of care
 ...and a thousand affections
 afflictions
 and gore (Bräuninger & Sitas, 1995:49).

Durban, in this imagining is filled with magic. However, it is also the site of much poverty and affliction. As such, the opera warns against glibly effacing the current realities with popular rhetoric like that reproduced below:

This is our new city:
 clean rivers, clean seas
 vibrant youth
 plantations, factories
 cross-culturalism
 multi-culturalism
 mixed massala
 curry, sugar, spice
 amahubo²¹ (Bräuninger & Sitas, 1995:9).

It is insufficient to merely pay lip service to cultural interaction (as the literature on multiculturalism points out) and use it to herald the advent of a new cultural space. Under all the positioning, manoeuvring and efforts to secure Durban as a world-class African city, it is important to separate meaningful cultural efforts from ersatz attempts at forging an identity which germinates in sole response to boosting commercial investment and tourism arrivals. The piece critically cautions against inflated commercial posturing and the sycophantic and capitalistic nature of those responsible for promoting Durban.

²¹ isiZulu ceremonial song.

Here tourism's capitalistic focus is obliquely criticised. The white industrialist father heralds his daughter's marriage to a black African man as:

...the wedding of the future
 a new culture
 a new practice
 a new world! (Bräuninger & Sitas, 1995:9)

The wedding fails to take place – warning the audience of the precarious nature of multicultural undertakings and underscores the importance of basing such efforts on meaningful engagements which do not obscure textured realities. As such, three friends of the bride remind one of Durban's intricate nature:

...Anglozulu Pondohindi Boeriporri
 spearwagging sugarcattling mangochucking
 nanabeading sleazosurfing megacrooking
 dagga leaf (Bräuninger & Sitas, 1995:10).

Dead Fish and Dreams of Love Again has never been performed. It is critical of Durban's tourist marketing strategies and economic aims and as such has failed to secure production interest. Bräuninger (Interview, 2004a) observes that there is space for such pieces if one keeps them small and contained. However, he feels that he and Sitas were asinine in thinking that the mid 1990s was the right time for such an opera. The piece would sell more easily if it was historical in nature as it would then be underscored by political support. Here rests a severe limitation of culture-led regeneration in Durban. It is only acceptable if it supports the position of the local authority. Nevertheless, this does not negate all value; for even without local authority support, cultural efforts actively participate in the co-constituting nature of urban space.

In order to create new urban sounds and share in the transformation of space, Bräuninger (2000:71) encourages artists to gather together in a "virtual" cultural or performance space:

Once 'there,' learning to dream a new language, diluting the mother tongue, unable to completely sever links with their culture of origin but coming to terms with a nomadic identity, the uprooting of once-comforting traditions and meanings, composing different sounds in their place, bearing a small part from 'the periphery' to places where hybridisation of cultures happens and where the emergence of new cultures is demanded: exploring alternatives, utopias (Bräuninger, 2000:71).

A virtual performance cultural space draws on notions of identity, place and home (Bräuninger Interview, 2004a). For Bräuninger (2000:72), performance genres and music especially “rebels against complacency, maps the messy reality”. In the case of Durban, this equates to a call for a virtual cultural space comprising of city-life and texture which allows for an interrogation of the local urban reality.

The annual *Awesome Africa* festival seeks to contribute to the creation of such a virtual cultural space in Durban by inviting moments of creolisation. Thalia Erwin (Interview, 2003), Project Manager of the event, observes that *Awesome Africa* is essentially a collaborative music festival which exposes one to new, non-stereotypical types of music. For example, collaborations at the 2003 event fused Mediterranean Catalan roots music with jazz-rock, Shembe liturgical chants and West African rhythms. The aim of the event is to profile international music inspired by Africa and to create an African music marketplace. Moreover, the festival incorporates elements of visual art, poetry and culture in order to highlight the vibrancy of urban Africa.

Durban space and its identity are key components of the festival. It is an affordable and easily accessible festival which instils pride in Durban's citizens. Moreover, *Awesome Africa* facilitates the presentation of music which displaces traditional stereotypes of African music and identity. There is a perception, particularly in Europe and America, that African music is represented by traditional African men dressed in loincloths pounding traditional instruments. The reality of the urban music scene and its identity is far more complicated than colonially infused notions of Africa (Erwin Interview, 2003). *Awesome Africa* exposes – locally and internationally – Durban's realities. It underscores the wealth of contemporary music available in addition to showcasing a city that is profoundly urban in character. In this sense, the festival exposes local, national and international guests to Durban. It highlights the fact that Durban has much to offer from an urban and cultural point of view. Hence, *Awesome Africa's* success is intimately involved with the success of Durban. For this reason, the organisers attempt to market and highlight its vibrant urban nature (Erwin Interview, 2003).

Therefore, *Awesome Africa* sees itself as intricately involved in promoting the sustainability of its local environment (Erwin Interview, 2003). Hence, the festival applies its social conscience to job creation and urban renewal. In 2003, the festival was held for the first time in Albert Park, a public park on the edge of the inner city. The Albert Park suburb, adjacent to the park, constitutes one of the oldest multi-racial

communities in Durban. It is also home to citizens from all over the African continent. In recent years, the area and its park, has declined. Services in many buildings have been disconnected. The area is a haven for prostitutes and vagrants and has become unsafe. Consequently, the area is in desperate need of regeneration. The decision to move *Awesome Africa* to the heart of the inner city was prompted by iTRUMP as part of their regeneration of the inner city.

iTRUMP and *Awesome Africa* form an obvious partnership (Erwin Interview, 2003). They work together constantly on the upliftment and renewal of Albert Park. Both Erwin (Interview, 2003) and Dobson (Interview, 2003) believe that the partnership between iTRUMP and *Awesome Africa* is crucial as *Awesome Africa* is able to deal with some of the softer issues of urban renewal. Finance is secured from alternative channels and employed in the upgrading of the local community's built fabric. To this end, Erwin sits permanently on the Albert Park Community Development Forum. In this way, *Awesome Africa*, remains cognisant of the community's needs and is able to liaise meaningfully with the relevant stakeholders. Erwin (Interview, 2003) asserts that this is not merely a formal relationship but that she has developed personal friendships and interests in the daily life of the community. Moreover, the festival has the obvious benefit of increasing employment in the area.

In accordance with the goals of iTRUMP, *Awesome Africa* seeks to open up urban space and make it more accessible on a practical and daily level. It seeks to bring back people to the inner city to engage with its vibrancy and energy. Albert Park is separated from an upmarket restaurant complex (Wilson's Wharf) by a major road: Victoria Embankment. *Awesome Africa* aims to reconnect these two spaces of the rich and the poor. Thus, like other projects, *Awesome Africa* attempts to add to a cultural landscape of Durban which is inclusive by attracting a mixture of people. *Awesome Africa* offers a non-manufactured, non-manipulative site for creolised relations. Its contribution to city-life and form illustrates how culture can organically boost city-wide identification and contribute to an improvement in the built fabric of Durban. As Julier (2005:885) observes, the "recognition that...any development of place-identity is one of nurturing pre-existing information resonates with the possibility that this is a process of appropriation and reappropriation rather than invention". By highlighting pre-existing creolisations, *Awesome Africa* actively and creatively seeks to transform Durban's urban space both materially and representationally.

(D)urban After Dark

An event which unites music, dance and other performance genres is also sculpturing Durban's cultural landscape. Indeed a much broader movement is concerned with shepherding performance into after-dark, central Durban. At the vanguard of these efforts is Carol Brown, the Director of the Durban Art Gallery and its periodic, non-profit, art event: *Red-Eye Art*²². *Red-Eye* was initiated in 1998 to both encourage Durban's 18-35 demographic group to engage in Durban's premier cultural institution and to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the inner city. *Red-Eye* is a multimedia art extravaganza. Each event, curated by a guest volunteer, is different. *Red-Eye* combines dance, music, performance, sculpture, video, piercing, lighting, pyrotechnics and spray art. Indeed, any creative effort is included and encouraged. Performers are usually given a small token monetary amount to cover their costs but are not paid (Brown Interview, 2003).

Red-Eye provides the site of a tentative engagement by the eThekweni Municipality, under whose jurisdiction the Durban Art Gallery falls, with alternative cultural representations of African urbanity. At times, the municipality partially sponsors cultural, artistic and musical events within Durban like *Awesome Africa* and *Red-Eye* (Dobson Interview, 2003; Sutcliffe Interview, 2003). *Red-Eye* provides a positive example of the retroactive association of cultural re-imagining and reshaping of urban space with the local authority. Brown (Interview, 2003) notes that *Red-Eye* has been so positive for Durban that the municipality invited it to be a part of their 2003 *Celebrate Durban* programme and offered to fund a relevant *Red-Eye* event. This marked the first occasion when the broader local authority officials exhibited interest in *Red-Eye*. Dobson (Interview, 2003) is aware that the arts are able to attract other sources of funding, allowing the municipality to deal with the 'soft' issues for which it lacks the capital. These 'soft' issues include developing a sense of identity, belonging and the formulation of a cultural sense of place. There are champions within the eThekweni Municipality structures, like Carol Brown and Richard Dobson, who support and promote the cultural activities and representations of *Red-Eye*. Yet the municipality as a whole needs to move beyond token sponsorship to recognition of the potential of cultural activities like *Red-Eye* to transform Durban's urban space. It also needs to be cognisant of the representations of African urbanity which stem from the event. *Red-Eye* is a perfect

²² Henceforth referred to as *Red-Eye*.

example for the local authority of the manner in which cultural regeneration can be initiated through provocative and challenging artistic endeavours which emerge from the built fabric of Durban itself. Durban and its residents possess the tools to revitalise the inner city and inscribe a vibrant Africanity in and on its landscapes. The local authority, while already participating in these events, should be convinced of their value and introduction on a larger scale. Moreover the eThekweni Municipality should look to encourage similar representations of African urbanity elsewhere in Durban in order to both regenerate the built fabric and encourage an African, urban imagery that challenges tired, stereotypical and ruralised representations of Durban.²³

Red-Eye has always seen the value of interacting with its surroundings and encouraging identification with its urban, African context. Brown (Interview, 2003) explains that it has been important for the Art Gallery, through *Red-Eye*, to destabilise the perceptions (especially of township dwellers) that the Durban City Hall and its Art Gallery is not part of their domain or their city. Indeed the Durban Art Gallery is the amenity least visited by the citizens of Durban (Econ Team Development Economists, 2003). The City Hall, with its inherently colonial architecture, can inspire notions of exclusion. However *Red-Eye*, with its irreverent disregard for the rules and regulations that are normally associated with behaviour in a gallery, has highlighted the accessibility of space and art to all. Citizenship and belonging is thus transformed from a *de jure* abstraction to a *de facto* reality. The Durban Art Gallery "is both a cultural recorder and resource. It is a unique witness to colonial imperialism...and the role that art and museums...can play today in a democratic South Africa" (Carman, 2003:251). Through *Red-Eye*, the Durban Art Gallery can play a role in reinvigorating urban space.

It does so in part by constructing a cultural path through Durban. *Red-Eye* hopes to portray Durban as a fun city with much to offer. It also seeks to illustrate that central Durban is not dangerous but in fact has broad scope and appeal (Brown Interview, 2003). Crucially the event forces people onto the streets at night with each event shaping a new and different trail through Durban's built environment. *Red-Eye*

²³ There is definite opportunity for incorporating alternative, organic, 'bottom-up' cultural trends within corporate culture as well. Following on from a similar project in Johannesburg, a cellular phone company, Cell C, launched its 'C for the City' campaign in Durban. This project consisted of a number of artists creating artwork that reflects their impressions of Durban and its people. The artworks are currently mounted on buildings in the inner city. Simultaneously, these artworks invest the built fabric with added cultural meaning as well as providing an alternative form of advertising for the cellular phone company. This project suggests that there is scope for an interaction with corporate and urban cultural representations.

always begins inside the Durban Art Gallery which is in the centre of the Durban City Hall. The Art Gallery, and the City Hall by extension, is inscribed as the cultural nerve centre of reworked African urbanity from which all forays into Durban and its identity flows. From the gallery, the event spills into the streets, squares and gardens around the City Hall. For example, Figure 8.1 displays one *Red-Eye* where a stage and pavement cafés were set up in Smith Street thereby encouraging the audience to linger outside after sunset.



Figure 8.1: Smith Street, *Red-Eye Intersection* (Photographs by author)

That *Red-Eye* takes place at night, in the centre of Durban is significant. While *Red-Eye* is supervised by a visible police presence, the effort to portray the central city as a safe, vibrant venue after dark has been very successful. Machen's (2004a:11) statement about *Vote/ Vote! Red-Eye*, where he mentions that he "got into my car and headed for the vitality of town", is telling; for, it implies that instead of leaving town for fun and excitement, quite the opposite is true. This night-time rendezvous opens up the long-feared 'after-hours' inner city as an inviting, friendly space. It destabilises feelings of apprehension and trepidation and makes Durban accessible and alluring. While no formal survey has been conducted, the *Red-Eye* organisers have had very positive feedback with regard to their use of the streets of the inner city. Consequently, people who have been to *Red-Eye* feel more comfortable about returning to the central city and the Durban Art Gallery for other exhibitions and events (Brown Interview, 2003). The central idea is to effect a re-colonisation of the city through art (Dobson Interview, 2003). It could be argued that this is not a re-colonisation but an attempt to engage previous histories. In the city centre, where Durban's early traders first interacted with the local population, these cultural activities re-invoke a sense of creolisation and work against

the effects of colonialism. It is in these palimpsest spaces that layers of meaning between the past and present can be accessed and harnessed to a cultural urban, African future.

Red-Eye's desire to assist in the transformation of Durban's space translates into a natural synergy with the goals of iTRUMP. For example, *Red-Eye Five* was conceived with Richard Dobson's participation. (Dobson is a regular attendee of *Red-Eye*). *Red-Eye Five* moved from the Durban City Hall through Albany Grove to the BAT Centre on the harbour front. Albany Grove is a seedy narrow lane, scattered with escort agencies and prostitutes. Visual art was installed in vacant shops in Albany Grove and spray artists painted the wall of the Albany Parking Garage – an artwork that remains today. The procession then moved through the underpass under the railway line (usually avoided by most Durbanites due to preconceptions that it is unsafe) where a drinks bar was erected and finally to the BAT Centre. Importantly, *Red-Eye* sought to defamiliarise this space and invest it with new meaning. It endeavoured to create both a physical and a cultural link between the space of the gallery and the BAT Centre. While close in proximity, the BAT Centre and Art Gallery are conceptually distant from each other. The underpass effectively restricts pedestrian movement so that the two entities are separated when their cultural activities should connect them far more significantly. Thus, *Red-Eye Five* sought to make this psychological link and inscribe a cultural path through the city (Brown Interview, 2003).

In this manner, new identifications with the space of Durban are formed. *Red-Eye* couples burgeoning creative talent with Durban's emerging sense of itself as an urban African entity. This theme is developed in the *Deconstructs Heritage, Celebrate Durban Red-Eye* (curated by Jay Pather); in *Red-Eye ND-ID 07.06.2002* (curated by Neville Trickett); and in *Red-Eye Celebrate Durban* and *(RE)UNION*²⁴ (both curated by David Gouldie). These events centre around celebrating Durban's art in addition to using performance art as a vehicle to deconstruct the city's heritage, space and its identity from a provocative and contemporary point of view. In order to comment on Durban's identity and space, actors sometimes climb the statues in Farewell Square (opposite the City Hall) and the steps of the City Hall itself are appropriated by dancers, models and bands. Figures 8.2 and 8.3 provide visual examples of the manner in which Durban's urban fabric is incorporated into performance art. Using lighting, dance and other art

²⁴ A similar performance-based event that makes statements about art and Durban's urbanity.



Figure 8.2: Re-appropriated Statues (*Red-Eye Art*, 2006)



Figure 8.3: Durban City Hall, *Red-Eye Intersection* (Photograph by author)

forms. performers and artists deliberately engage with symbols of the past. Artistic appropriation of colonial statues and architecture inscribes contemporary cultural meanings on the built environment and initiates a new sense of African urbanity. In this configuration, Africanity is based on the reclamation of the urban landscape as part of the African experience and simultaneously invokes new cultural understandings of African urbanity. Such activities invest former colonial spaces with new life and significance; however, they also reach into the past. Remaining cognisant of Durban's colonial history, the various performances do not seek to disguise it. One can still see

the original statue or architectural feature beneath each artist's engagement. Accordingly, as Minty (2006:432) suggests, statues and monuments can be "recontextualised", providing opportunities for the insertion of new narratives into the city. In so doing, the hegemony of these colonial symbols (and colonialism itself) is undermined. Space, symbols and statues are thus incorporated into new formats in a profoundly postcolonial manner. Part of Durban's identity and its urbanity rests in its ability to culturally engage with the spaces and structures of the past in a manner which highlights the freedom and democracy of the present. These encounters with monuments of the past also work to underscore both historical and contemporary creolisations. In reworking the present, the past is summoned up as the performers search for an interaction with the landscape pre-dating the colonial built fabric. In this way, the layers of Durban are peeled away and connections are formed between pre-colonial and postcolonial sensibilities, creolisations, urbanity and identity. Such an engagement supports the narrative's suggestion that current strivings towards African identities and urbanities can be profitably linked to points of pre-colonial imbrication.

New and existing creolisations were the subject of *Red-Eye Ignite*, the second of which took place in Medwood Gardens – opposite the Durban City Hall. This inner city space is diurnally used by workers lunching, evangelists preaching, homeless people resting or as a shortcut across town. The gardens were transformed by *Red-Eye Ignite* into a night-time fairyland. Visual art installations and sculptures lit up the night while the paving, cobblestones, grass, chessboard and water feature became the sets for dancers, puppet shows, fashion shows, video projection, disc and video jockeys. One performance involved a dancer inside a rubbish bin laced with flames:

Flailing arms, signalling through flames that looked as though they would devour him, Duma, provided a powerful symbol for contemporary dance. The drastic shifts in all contexts (this was an initiative funded by the eThekweni Municipality) made the work both a shocking and an articulate experience of a man struggling to shrug off his desire to kill white people. He performed this in a space populated by hobos and the unemployed, at night in the middle of the city, to recorded Indian ragas, shouting expletives in Zulu while his two fellow dancers elegantly negotiated the black-and-white squares of the public chessboard painted on the asphalt (Pather, 2004:5)

The dancer's effective and practical use of the available space and furniture illustrates how space governs, limits and creates possibilities with respect to physical performance

and movement. In return, the dancer simultaneously shapes the host space. This two-way interaction invigorates an imagined and material cultural landscape which activates city-space as an authentic and vital part of identification and identity. Site-specific performance and art continually negotiates the synthesis of 'real' and 'ideal' space (Kaye, 2000). Using mundane municipal objects for performance, such as dustbins, life-size chessboards or even trucks (see Figure 8.4), inscribes the cultural into and onto everyday life. It also hints that there is not a large difference between real and ideal space. Rather, in the imbrication of the real and ideal, the potential for urban transformation is revealed.



Figure 8.4: Truck Performance, *Red-Eye Intersection* (Photographs by author)

Significantly, *Red-Eye*'s appeal is widespread. Despite the advent of democracy in South Africa, there are few events which attract as broad a spectrum of the population. While *Red-Eye* started out as a predominantly 'white event', the balance has shifted towards a 50:50 ratio between white and black African with a growing Indian segment (Brown Interview, 2003). *Red-Eye* is one of the few sites in Durban which hosts real cultural and racial interaction. As such, the event offers a unique cultural vibrancy and spirit. As Machen (2004a:11) observes: "What was so overwhelming, beyond all the

entertainment, was how wonderful it was...to see the collective culture of youth in a single shared space". For Machen (2004a:11), apart from *Red-Eye*, there "are no permanent shared social spaces in Durban". *Red-Eye* exposes its followers not only to interactive art but also to an alternative space in which shared experiences are cultivated. One of the reasons for this is that *Red-Eye* constitutes an accessible space. A nominal fee (a maximum of R20 with discounts for students) is usually charged to enter the Durban Art Gallery for the first part of the proceedings. Thereafter, the street activities are available and accessible for anyone who might want to linger and join in. The programme also seeks to encourage artists from different spaces within Durban itself to perform. The artists usually bring their entourage of supporters, the result being that different people are brought into contact with each other. Much is demanded of these audiences: "Confronted with multiple, and often interpenetrating voices...audiences are invited to encounter the site in which these works are realised as re-framed and overlaid by narratives which challenge and draw on the place of their presentation" (Kaye, 2000:53).

Reaching into the City

There are other artistic activities occurring in Durban which are broadening the cultural footprint of the city in addition to affecting its identity and urbanity.²⁵ These are briefly discussed here. In addition to their performance work, The Flatfoot Dance Company, Fantastic Flying Fish Dance Company, Siwela Sonke Dance Theatre and the Durban Art Gallery all conduct regular outreach programmes (Gouldie Interview, 2004; Brown Interview, 2003; Loots Interview, 2003; Pather Interview, 2003). Loots (Interview, 2003) believes that outreach programmes open up new spaces of interaction in Durban. Some companies also provide regular dance training for children. Indeed, Gouldie (Interview 2004) suggests that these children are becoming extremely literate theatregoers as they are taken to numerous productions in Durban. This initiative

²⁵ While the art scene in Durban is currently prolifically and artfully immersing itself in the complexities of the city's urbanity, the constant paucity of funding and poor level of government support and dialogue looms just as large as it does elsewhere in the country (Comins, 2004; Machen, 2004b; Pather, 2004; Pillay, 2004). Funding, perhaps, will be the caveat to further cultural-based efforts. Yet, Durban also suffers from general audience apathy and from a steady exodus of its creative minds who are unable to make a living. It is apposite to be cognisant of such vagaries which plague the arts community and hinder their productivity. Despite this, many artists feel that Durban is a stimulating work environment and the city remains the inspiration for those that leave. Moreover, the high turnover of creative minds opens space for younger artists ensuring a constant stream of creativity (Tolsi, 2004).

ascribes a sense of agency in the children. Additionally, it extends the cultural landscape of Durban so that its identity becomes more inclusive and participatory.

Together, the sharing of space and ideas produces a new space which is different and speaks to Durban's identity in a meaningful way. It creates a space which defines urbanity and Africanity according to vernacular experience as inclusive, vibrant and profoundly urban. Furthermore these artistic activities "are absorbed back into the media to become yet another repertoire of iconography in which the city's meanings are produced" (Kaye, 2000:37). Participation in the cityscape does not simply result in the absorption of the artistic practices; rather, it disrupts both the fabric of Durban and its associated identities.

Various artistic efforts within the broader city have also begun to culturally inject themselves into Durban and radiate outwards so that artistic production no longer occurs only in the inner city Art Gallery. These efforts are reproduced in other spaces such as artSPACE durban, a particularly interesting gallery. Recently opened, it occupies warehouse premises in a light industrial area. It provides exhibition space for students and emerging artists (Meijer, 2003). Rentals are fairly low ranging from R50 to R250 for use of the gallery. artSPACE durban Director Karen Bradtke (Interview, 2004) does not charge for entry and does not expect the venue to generate any income for its first few years. An important function of the space is to promote public art and urban renewal (Meijer, 2003). artSPACE durban thus not only offers a new venue for Durban artists to display their work but also seeks to renew Durban's built fabric while injecting it with art. artSPACE durban extends the city's cultural landscape. Art is mobilised in areas apparently inhospitable to its germination. The gallery's presence underscores its industrial surroundings; Durban is, in one sense, an industrial town. However, it is also a cultural space. Its industry does not preclude its cultural foundation. Moreover, in opening up spaces to art and culture, the gallery enables the city to be perceived and walked and experienced within the textures of Durban life itself. The very location underpins Durban's urbanity and the African-ness of its situation.

Conclusion

Durban (its space and identity) is thus undergoing a continuous contouring through its interwoven dance, music and performance art. In encountering the city through the different art forms, the chapter reveals the manner in which performance and cultural activities become part of, participate in and transform both

material and representational Durban. Through encountering, moving, dancing and experimenting, new paths of connection and creolisation are created in Durban. At the same time, the built fabric and urban form dictate these pathways underscoring the co-constituting nature of identity and urbanity. Durban's imbricated cultural constituents outline a particularly African, urban stage. Durban city experience is thus altered from a purely utilitarian practice to something more fluid, suggestive, inclusive, accessible and open to manipulation. Such efforts culturally inscribe city life and form with a cultural dimension which complicates, disturbs but also reinforces Durban's identity as a postcolonial, African space, giving rise to a textured spatial imagery and language which conveys the possibilities of the African, urban future. The narrative of this chapter highlights the substantive opportunity for forging new creative approaches to reinvigorating the urban instead of relying on outdated colonial tropes.

9

Concluding the Narrative

Nearing the End of the Story; or, Is it the Beginning?

The present narrative of Durban's identity has taken a progressive, meandering approach in reading Durban in terms of its urban Africanity. By rehearsing the plot and narrative diversions, the possibility arises for both revision and new vision, providing a platform for investigating new beginnings. The narrative, intimately concerned with the urban/ cultural interface, begins in Chapter 2 with a contemplation of the mutually constituting nature of urban identity. Emerging from the theoretical concerns manifest in the literature on the postcolonial, Chapter 2 invokes the urban as a key site of the postcolonial. Urban sites are pivotal in fusing themes and issues of postcolonialism, creolisation and multiculturalism. Chapter 3 concentrates these issues in terms of the African continent. In particular, Chapter 3 attempts to understand the legacy of the 'Durban System' on the representation of African cities as quintessentially rural. Yet, as Chapter 4 suggests, Durban's urban identity is marked by a history of creolisation, a point which formal colonisation tried to suppress. As Chapters 5 and 6 illustrate, such obscuring of the past has insidiously continued to the present in the form of the discursive and material 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and uShaka Marine World respectively. Both these chapters identify the manner in which Durban has been discursively and materially reinvented through traditionalised, ruralising codes.

Having read thus far, the final chapters offer both a continuation and a point of departure. In Chapters 7 and 8, the discussion turns to cultural efforts which have the potential to reinvigorate the notion that the African city is a vibrant urban space. The chapter does so by attaching postcolonial urban geography to the wider project of composing and developing new postcolonial geographical traditions. These new traditions are necessary for understanding the sensibilities and politics of the urban, postcolonial world. This is a task for researchers living in postcolonial urban environments who, in their efforts to disturb 'western' interpretations, have the ability to imagine cities in a different light (Yeoh, 2001).

Imagining postcolonial, African cities like Durban differently, can illuminate issues of culture and identity and bring new lenses to the postcolonial, urban

project. Postcolonialism is steeped in critique in its efforts to uncover (unequal) relations of power and disaggregate how meaning is constructed. As pointed out in Chapter 2, it is valuable in terms of exposing, deconstructing and challenging cultural representations and legacies informed by colonialism. Certainly in this form, postcolonialism has provided an extremely helpful tool in challenging and questioning the representations and identities relating to the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and uShaka Marine World. Postcolonialism is thus powerful in understanding the links between space and identity.

One must also remember that postcolonialism is helpful in terms of shedding light on layers of meaning in terms of a creative project. Its ability to take culture seriously is really useful. Yet, the postcolonial literature is perhaps embryonic in identifying alternative forms of urban consciousness and effective points of creolisation. The literature has noted the potential for urban cultural forms to influence material practices but it is when this understanding is married to postcolonial perspectives that it becomes most useful. If one is to heed Yeoh's (2001) challenge to elaborate alternative, postcolonial, urban geographical traditions, one must focus on postcolonialism's ability to illuminate notions of the co-constituting nature of urbanity and identity in a way which does not reinforce old relations of power.

The preceding discussion of Durban's identity supports the literature that proposes that the postcolonial urban form is characterised by both continuities and disjunctures with the colonial past. Durban, after all, is an example of a postcolonial city that both rejects and appropriates the culture of colonialism. It adopts the culture of colonialism through discursive and material strategies which rely on colonially-inspired ruralised codes. It also repels colonialism's influence through creating a vibrant sense of urban Africanity and by drawing connections and links to Durban's pre-colonial, nascent urban creolisations. Thus, the narrative has followed Yeoh (2001) in interrogating space (both material and imagined) towards the aim of revealing the postcolonial condition.

In addition, debates of multiculturalism and creolisation (discussed in Chapter 2) both shape Durban's cultural landscape and identity. Insurgent multiculturalism, as has been pointed out, provides a critical reference point for interrogating the prevailing representational tactics of Durban's mainstream promotional efforts in Chapters 5 and 6. It also creates the space where such criticism is linked to the production of new spaces and associated identities (like those discussed in Chapters 7 and 8) which challenge stereotypical, racist and patriarchal principles and representations. In Durban, through discursive and material sites like the 'Kingdom of the

Zulu' campaign and uShaka Marine World, commodified multiculturalism exoticises and homogenises diverse cultures. It is in this light that Nutall and Michael's (2000) argument, that multicultural discourses be recast and debate shifted to discussions regarding creolisation, is most percipient. In suggesting that city space is a key site of creolisation, Nuttall and Michael (2000) invite new, open readings of the city, where reliance on the 'exotic' is completely inadequate.

Durban's continental location further complicates the narrative. Therefore, the issues outlined in Chapter 3 serve to provide more theoretical support, particularly in terms of African specificity. African identities, like others, are difficult to pinpoint. Nevertheless, freeing notions of African identity from time and geography, as Mbembe (2002) suggests, is a start. South African identities are naturally involved in the wider debates of Africanity but are additionally impacted upon by the recent apartheid past. As the literature notes, South Africans are grappling with the task of imagining new national identities in the post-apartheid context. Simultaneously, part of the post-apartheid identity searching involves an intellectual and cultural return to African – manifest in Mbeki's African Renaissance rhetoric. It is apparent that the African Renaissance has not, to date, been harnessed to the urban. However, precisely as McEachern (2001) suggests, city identity offers a method for South Africans to negotiate and re-appropriate inclusive notions of space and identity.

Yet as Chapter 3 attests, little has been written about culture and identity at the city scale in the South African context. It is this gap which the thesis has attempted to explore. As Chapter 3 illuminates, African urbanity has traditionally been envisioned and represented in terms of rural codes, a project initiated by the colonialists and given impetus by the infamous 'Durban System'. As the chapter points out, post-apartheid cities (with their influx of street traders, informal settlements and practices such as cattle-killing) have uncannily disrupted the familiar boundaries between urban and rural, paradoxically inspiring representational tactics like those discussed in Chapters 5 and 6 which serve to reinforce these traditional boundaries. The outcome of such strategies is the tendency to view African cities, not in terms of the urban, but as rural sites or sites ripe for development. However, it is precisely in postcolonial African cities that new representational codes and identities can be identified which stem from daily urban life. Some commentators like Landry (2000) argue that strong identities are cultivated through creating new images and traditions instead of relying on anachronistic, out-dated images. Durban, as an African city, is an urban space which

negotiates time, history and space. Through performance art, dance, music and graphic design, Durban emerges as a stage, script or narrative text in which Africa and its identity is tackled. As such, Mpe (2003) suggests that the city can be viewed as a text or a discourse which can be read in various ways. Importantly, the city as a form of discourse interacts with other discourses such as dance, literature, music and other performing arts in order to establish new traditional, images and identities.

Having established the major points of theoretical departure, the thesis turns directly to Durban. Chapter 4 begins with the oft-overlooked point that when reading Durban, it is important to progress from the notion that the city's identity has always been creolised, shifting and unstable. Any contemporary study of identity must be cognisant of "the historical identities of people and places" (Miles, 2005b:923). Suggesting that Durban is a palimpsest space, Chapter 4 examines the socio-spatial creolisations of early Durban and indicates the manner in which these were suppressed by the first colonialists. Developing out of the literature on creolisation, the chapter investigates the early creolising form of Durban. The narrative invokes stories of Durban's city life and form, stressing the manner in which its identity evolved in tandem with the built environment. The chapter highlights the manner in which pre-colonial contact between early traders and indigenous people has left an imprint on Durban's current city life and form. Aside from the genetic legacy, these interactions, whether for reason of convenience, circumstance, protection or necessity, have left their mark on Durban's cultural memory. The imposition of colonial control over Durban disguised earlier formats. Chapter 4 shows how the advent of formal colonialism required a reinvention of tradition and history. Pre-colonial histories became effectively filtered out of popular consciousness. Indeed, later reinventions, such as the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign and uShaka Marine World, draw not on Durban's rich pre-colonial creolised origins but on the values and attitudes of a post-annexation colonial society. Hence, any reading of culture and identity in Durban must be cognisant of mutual entanglements. Durban's pre-colonial origins are a valid and valuable resource available for the reconstitution of Durban's identity and urbanity.

Having appreciated the rich creolised foundation upon which current explorations of Durban's identity could potentially rest, the narrative turns to the manner in which discursive and material tourist strategies in Durban rely on stereotypical colonial myths in order to market a ruralised image of Durban and its identity. As has been previously pointed out, like other cities, Durban's economy, in a context of global

deindustrialisation, has shifted. Tourism and cultural strategies have been universally touted as key drivers of economic growth. As Chapter 5 discusses, these trends have increased the profile of the city marketing paradigm and city branding has become widespread. It is for this reason that the thesis looks at how Durban uses culture to market and represent itself to global investors, tourists and its citizens.

In Durban, a particular discursive-material model (discussed in Chapters 5 and 6) is operating to form and market an image-based identity situated around ruralised colonial concepts. Durban's prescribed identity has its germination in the strategy of the KZNTA whose 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign discursively positions the city as a portal into a ruralised simulacrum. Durban's representation as the gateway to the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' is intrinsically imbricated with the rural theme of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign as a whole. This thesis has demonstrated the centrality of Durban to the KZNTA and emphasises how the tropes of adventure, paradise and exotic indigenous culture, as prevalent in the overall rural focus of the campaign, are internalised and concentrated within the space of the urban environment. Durban is discursively situated as a simulated pleasure-palace. This pleasure-palace is based on ideologies inherited and influenced by nineteenth century colonialism and romanticism. The implication of such a framework is the exoticising of Durban as a lost paradise. In effect, this denies Durban's profoundly urban nature, production base and democratic government. All these features are sidelined in the face of appeals to tribal, magical and bewitched discourses which negate the notion of a postmodern urban place. Thus, the image of Durban as pleasure-palace is artificial and contrived.

The KZNTA's artificial conception of Durban as a simulated pleasure-palace is mirrored in the built fabric of the city where colonial and romantic imperatives are internationalised through regeneration developments such as uShaka Marine World. Those responsible for these projects are keen to brand them within the tropes already established within the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' campaign. As in the discursive space of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu', wildlife and indigenous culture are imbricated in a peculiar relationship in the material space of uShaka Marine World. Particularly appealing to images of ocean wildlife (sharks) and Shaka, uShaka Marine World semantically and neocolonially enforces stereotypical notions of Africanity. Thus the marketing strategy and marine park are pivots on an identity model which operates to create an image of Durban which is then materially inscribed in the built fabric of Durban. In this manner, inappropriate and irresponsible representations of Durban's identity and urbanity are

offered for both resident and tourist consumption perpetuating colonial and neocolonial dependencies. The identity promoted by the KZNTA and the uShaka Marine World developers is more closely associated with a globalised commodified culture than a real engagement with the constituents of Africanity. It is clearly apparent that wider, more informed and less colonialist conceptions of African urban identity are required to dispel conventional stereotypes of Africa and African urbanity which commonly situate Africa as rural, traditional, static and unchanging.

As such, the identity constructed for Durban is exclusionary. In the guise of multiculturalism, the commodified essences of stereotypical ethnicity are coerced into a manufactured landscape of adventure, paradise and indigenous culture. The narrative has revealed certain deficits in certain versions of multiculturalism and has enabled an understanding of the type of multiculturalism appealed to in Durban; namely, an assimilationist, exoticising and Anglo-centric multiculturalism. Hence, discourses around Durban's identity invoke a system of inclusion and exclusion. In this landscape, access to citizenship becomes necessarily qualified. The textured nature of contemporary Durban urbanity and identity is sidelined at the expense of an imagined rural landscape of pleasure. This thesis has illustrated how citizenship in Durban is especially contestory in these terms, especially for black Africans. Colonial and apartheid ideologies predicated on the inability to comprehend black African urbanity persist. The discourses of the 'Kingdom of the Zulu' marketing strategy and uShaka Marine World continue to deny black Africans access to *de facto* citizenship in the city. Durban's projected discursive identity is thus a sanitised and romantic one which homogenises the city and conceals processes of racialisation. However, in opposition to the dominant, official story of Durban, Chapters 7 and 8 have illustrated that there are many alternative narratives of Durban's identity and urbanity. Following Annecke and Swilling's (2004) challenge, the present thesis makes space for initiating a telling of these alternative stories.

This study has endeavoured to visualise the city as site and symbol, material and intangible, concrete and representational and has attempted to bring new lenses to viewing representations of identity and space in the urban postcolonial context. By contributing to an emerging postcolonial, urban geography of Durban, a productive encounter between recent theorisations about the postcolonial and the space of the contemporary African city has been forged. Using multiple stories of Durban, this thesis has attempted to construct and elaborate an alternative, postcolonial, urban

geographical tradition. The narrative offers a new, vibrant, urban and cultural approach to reading Africanity and urbanity.

The stories of Durban presented in this thesis illustrate that the content of Africanity is open for reinterpretation from a number of different sources be they official tourism promoters, the local authority, urban developers or cultural practitioners. The examples taken from the genres of urban development, graphic design, music, dance and performance art illustrate that a Durban identity based on alternative, urban conceptions of contemporary African identity is flourishing. Durban is host to a quiet urban revolution which is concurrently urban and African. This invites such rich possibilities for the African Renaissance to harness a sense of African urbanity. The link between the urban and the African is practiced and experienced every day in Durban's city life and form; the arts privilege this experience. Urban space is reworked according to a cultural landscape which is manifest both literally and figuratively. City life and city form is culturally inscribed which ultimately reinforces Durban's identity as a postcolonial, African city. This thesis has shown that postcolonialism is useful not only in terms of critiquing relations of power in the urban landscape but is also helpful in subverting the power of commodified capitalism and opening up new urban spaces of cultural interaction and creolisation. The cultural landscaping of Durban has the potential to destabilise and undercut commercialised representations while simultaneously discursively and physically transforming urban space and its identity.

This narrative fills a gap in the research being conducted on post-apartheid Durban. In this case, the cultural has been used to tell another story of Durban – a story of cultural landscaping which has not been told before. Postcolonial cultural readings generally focus on difference but here the focus is also trained on creolisations, imbrications and connections. The narrative proposes that creolisation offers a useful point of interrogation into the South African city and highlights the fact that a co-constituting identity has always been part of the Durban urban experience. Such a project has been lacking within the ambit of urban geography both in South Africa and beyond. It encourages local and western geographers to tell cultural city scale stories that are less bound by socio-economic concerns. In terms of policy relevance the discussion is also important in suggesting that a postcolonial critique can reveal that cultural-led regeneration need not rely only on grand schemes and iconic, flagship developments but that interventions can be just as meaningful and profound on a more modest, organic scale. This point is of use to both local and international scholarship.

This narrative has sought to challenge and change the stories that geographers tell (or do not tell) about culture, identity and urban space. In being more attuned to the cultural and representational stories which shape urban life and form, urban geography can engage more fully with the performed, imagined and lived fabric of cities. Furthermore, it creates the space in which other urban, postcolonial stories can emerge.

Postscript: Durban Girl Revisited

In a way, this has been not only a narrative about Durban and its identity but also a personal story. It is very much a story of my Durban and my life. I have enjoyed immersing myself in the fabric of Durban life, attending countless site-specific and performance art productions, visiting exhibitions, listening to music and researching Durban's history. Durban has shaped me and I it (albeit in a very modest manner). Durban has so many stories of vibrant African urbanity to tell. This is important because my experience of Durban as an exciting place to be in has nothing to do with essentialised warrior figures, scenic beauty and adventurous escapades. Indeed, its pulse is in so many ways mediated by its urban character that it difficult for me to accept trite and stereotypical versions of identity and space. There is so much that is challenging, interesting and exciting about Durban which cannot be adequately packaged within the tropes of adventure, paradise and indigenous culture. Durban is undeniably an African diver(c)ity. It is presently faced with a moment of opportunity, to engage and negotiate the contradicting facets of its identity and initiate new narratives indicative of an urban, African, postcolonial city. This is, after all, a narrative of beginnings...

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